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The Department's Top Personnel Manager Talks About Jobs, EEO, and Women in USDA

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* The following interview with Dr.
* Joan S. Wallace is part of a con-
* tinuing series of interviews with
* USDA's new high-level appointees.
* Dr. Wallace is the first black to be
* appointed an Assistant Secretary in
* USDA. She is Assistant Secretary for
* Administration.
*

Q. USDA's employment of women and minorities (including blacks, Hispanics, and other racial groups) is only about half of the federal government average. What do you anticipate doing to improve that record?

A. I feel a strong commitment to the issue of equal employment opportunity, as well as to other civil rights areas. It seems to me—and Secretary Bergland agrees—that USDA has a bad record in that regard. I find it interesting that some universities have much tighter controls on equal employment opportunity. In fact, at Western Michigan University, where I worked before coming here, one man—an affirmative action officer—essentially controlled all of the hiring. While administrators could do their own hiring, each college or administrator at the university had to submit various documents to the affirmative action officer, proving they had adequately searched for minority candidates, before any new hire was approved. USDA doesn't have an accountability system, nor goals nor timetables. We are really dependent upon the good faith efforts of people. That hasn't worked. So we will have to use stronger methods to increase opportunities for minorities and other protected groups.

Q. As a double minority, so to speak, do you feel any extra pressure to quickly improve job opportunities for women and minorities?

A. Affirmative action has been an important interest of mine for a long time. I was involved with affirmative

action with the National Urban League prior to coming here. I was responsible for affirmative action as vice president for administration at Morgan State University, and I am still involved with affirmative action. I suppose my involvement has something to do with my being a double minority. But it is also because I came from parents who believed that "Black Is Beautiful" long before anybody ever said it. My father was an artist who painted many portraits of black Americans and black heroes. So I knew black history. Later, I learned about other ethnic groups so I

one has to find out what the problems are, plan to solve them, and do it. I expect the statistics to change within the first year.

Q. How would you respond to the concern of some employees that EEO will mean favoritism for women and minorities?

A. It seems to me it's the American way to have "favoritism" for some employees. We have had veteran's preference in law for quite a while. Nobody seems to mind providing preferential treatment for veterans. However, it seems that when



At Congressional reception honoring her appointment, new USDA Assistant Secretary Joan S. Wallace (left) is flanked by Secretary and Mrs. Bergland.

have worked to achieve progress for a long time. You could say it's an obligation, but it is also a commitment.

Q. How long will it be before there's a significant improvement in USDA minority employment?

A. That's difficult to say. It is clear, however, in some areas that there are roadblocks. Some are attitudinal, some are institutional. It means that

minorities and women, who have been discriminated against for centuries, come up to get equal opportunity, it suddenly becomes a problem to everybody. Minorities and women want options. They want opportunities. They want to aspire for the same things everybody else does. Fortunately, or unfortunately, my own parents never said that being black or female was an impediment. So I just assumed that if you worked

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hard and learned as much as you could and did the best job you could, that you could move up. Now for me it has worked. But I have found that even if you do work hard and do move up, you still have to deal with racism and sexism. Some people become threatened when they think something of theirs is at stake, even if it's their own prejudice. For a long time, minorities and women have been the last hired and the first fired, so something has to make up for it.

Q. When did you first hear about this job and why do you think you were chosen?

A. I learned about this job the day before I was on my way to Harvard University to attend a 6-week, 12-course institute on management. In the morning on that day, Western Michigan University called and said I had been unanimously chosen by the faculty and administration for a job there. In the afternoon, USDA called. I had not accepted the Western Michigan job at the time, but I did tell them about the telephone call from Agriculture. I didn't hear from USDA again for about 3 weeks when I was called and asked to come in for an interview. I flew in from Harvard and talked with Secretary Bergland. It was then that I was asked to complete the papers for the job. I assume that the reason I obtained the job is that I was the best qualified person. I have had people ask me, even in a television interview, 'Did you get the job because you are black and female?' It's true that I am black and female, but I do have a few other qualifications, including about 10 years of administrative experience. I have been vice president for administration at a university, as well as a dean. I have had training in administration, and I have a Ph. D. degree in experimental social psychology. I also have a master's degree in social work, and have done a great deal of work with people. So it was those qualifications which helped me secure the job.

Q. How does your background in psychology benefit you in your present position?

A. Any administrative job deals with people. Certainly, you have to know administrative systems, but you also have to know how the systems impact on people. Personnel is one of my major responsibilities and that department has policies which affect over 80,000 full-time employees. So a job like this, which includes both administrative systems such as data processing, operations, admin-



istrative law, finance, etc., cannot exist without people. I used to tell my students that once they learned to understand people, they could do much with their skills, by transferring them from one milieu to another. I also said that they could add other skills as they move on. I started out as a social worker. I then went into a whole new field, experimental social psychology. I knew nothing about research, but I learned it. I didn't know how to teach, but I learned it. When I went to work with the National Urban League, I didn't know too much about fund-raising. But that year my staff raised \$8 million. So you keep learning, and keep growing. I suppose if I had a philosophy of life I would say that one needs to keep learning. There is no time in life that one should feel that they know it all because they never do.

Q. What similarities or differences do you see between college and government administration?

A. Administration is administration. There are very similar political and structural experiences one finds in any administration. This system, however, is much larger than a university. The biggest difference here is that millions become billions, and thousands become hundred thousands.

Q. Will the reorganization that USDA is undergoing result in an increase or decrease in jobs?

A. I think it will result in a decrease in jobs. There's no real reason to reorganize if you end up needing more jobs. But Secretary Bergland has stated repeatedly that no employee will be dismissed as a result of the reorganization and no person will be downgraded. One of the things

we should find as we reorganize is that some areas are over-staffed, while other areas suffer from a shortage of personnel. If that is true, we should be able to place people in areas where they are needed.

Q. Besides the reorganization, what else is the Department doing to improve efficiency?

A. I think that Secretary Bergland has surrounded himself with a creative group of assistant secretaries and staff. Not only are they creative, but they are hard-working and conscientious. I am very impressed with the tenacity and concern that they have about their own areas and about seeing to it that things are going right. I really have positive feelings about this group of administrators in that they are very enthusiastic about making this Department work. To them this isn't just a "pass-through job."

Q. How would you rate the Department in terms of management efficiency?

A. That's difficult for me because I have just begun. But I am very impressed with the people that I relate to.

Q. Do you think EEO and civil rights would receive greater emphasis if they reported directly to Secretary Bergland?

A. I have already set up a task force to study that situation. I will be able to answer that question once we have taken an objective look at the matter. Currently, the Office of Equal Opportunity reports directly to me, while the equal employment opportunity section reports to the Office of Personnel which reports to me. The critical EEO action is in the agencies. The administrators are the people who do the hiring. Personnel does not hire—they mainly process the papers. So it is really up to agency administrators to make EEO work. Secretary Bergland has been very outspoken in articulating his commitment to EEO and that is good. We would like to work with the agency administrators to assist them in fulfilling the goals. Sometimes it's a matter of developing programs that will eventually change the system. Sometimes it's a matter of being especially sensitive about the prerequisites for a job so that people are not unnecessarily excluded.

Q. There's a lot of talk these days about improving the quality of the federal personnel system in terms of recruiting, examining, evaluating, etc. What are some ways USDA could improve its own personnel system?

A. I suggest we take a good look at the civil service system. I believe this is being now by the Civil Service Commission itself. There are a number of proposals which will create reform and provide more flexibility in hiring. Probably one of the problems with recruitment is that there are very few people to handle that function.

Q. In recruiting employees in the future, which job skills will employers be looking for most?

A. I think we will see an increasing demand for people with technical skills particularly in the area of energy and other related fields. We've moved, obviously, into a more automated, technological environment where the demand for technical skills will only continue to expand. Likewise, there is going to be a continuing need for people who can deal with other people and assess what their needs are. Although managers have different styles, there is no way of getting away from managing people.

Q. What sort of incentives would you suggest for improving employee morale?

managers don't have that kind of attitude. It also takes managers who can distinguish between good and poor performers so that they don't reward employees who don't do as well as employees who do quite well. They should be creative in helping make the job more interesting and in providing upward mobility. One change which could occur in our personnel system is the elimination of the middle range in terms of evaluating employees. Studies show that most supervisors tend to rate right in the middle. Since no one wants to be the bad guy, one of the things we can do is take the middle step out so that employees fall on one side of the scale or the other. Then they know where they stand.

Q. Last year alone, USDA suffered losses in the area of health and safety (from personal injury payments, negligence claims, and property damage) of almost \$14 million. That money could have paid the base salary of 1,000 additional employees at grade GS-7, step 4. How do you propose reducing those losses?

there's no expansion in the work force. What is your reaction to that?

A. It is difficult. Because if an agency is not growing, it's really just a matter of slots where there is attrition, etc. But I've heard some people say that you can not achieve affirmative action because of civil service listings, veteran's preference, and a host of other things. Well, most women don't have veteran's preference, so we have to do something to help them get in. The Civil Service Commission is in the process of making recommendations that will change some of the institutional barriers and open the system. It is planning, for example, to expand the list of people which employers can choose from to fill a vacant position. At present, employers can choose from among three names. CSC is thinking of expanding the number to five or ten so employers can have a broader range. Just a simple thing like that could make a difference. It seems to me that people manage to do with the system whatever they really want without disobeying the law. I think if we really want to do something about affirmative action, then it has to become a priority.

Q. The Administration is planning to require race, sex, and ethnic data again on federal job applications. Do you think this will lead to more discrimination?

A. That's one of those no-win situations. I have been through the experience (during the 1960's and '70's) of trying to find minority students for universities in which there was no way to identify them from applications. We had to use all kinds of methods—sororities, addresses, churches—and any other item that would seem to identify a student as a minority. Many times we had to be in the community to know if a student's address was in a black or Spanish neighborhood. We worked hard using what you might call unobtrusive measures trying to find minority candidates. Not having a person's race on the application was "color blindness," but that was a case where color blindness was no help at all. Now it is true that prior to that time it wasn't helpful either to have race and sex on the application because people were using it to discriminate. But now with all of our civil rights laws, we are supposed to act affirmatively and having this data should be helpful in doing that. Sure, there are going to be those people who will try to use the information to discriminate against applicants, but I would rather be able to say to an

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With two of her three sons in background, Dr. Wallace receives oath of office from Secretary Bergland.

A. I believe the incentives already exist in the federal service. And I am pleased that they are there, too, because it sometimes becomes a problem—under the present within-grade system—to get all employees to do their very best when they feel there is no reason to. But I think it takes things other than incentives to get employees to do their best job. It takes an attitude of high expectation. People respond to rewards, but they also respond to a positive attitude and expectation, and jobs that are challenging. Sometimes we as

A. That's an area that I have not had a chance to look into. But my natural instinct would be to say that if that is a problem area, then it is one that should be corrected. I believe we should determine if the problems are caused by the nature of our work, or because we have more situations which can cause more problems. Our safety efforts must be strengthened.

Q. Civil Service Chairman Alan Campbell has said that it's difficult to achieve affirmative action no matter how much emphasis is applied when

administrator, 'You knew that this person was qualified, and Hispanic, and you didn't hire him.' The facts are right there. Before they could always say, 'Well, we didn't know.' So, you can use the information either for or against, but I think I prefer having it.

Q. What advice would you give to minorities and women trying to get ahead in USDA?

A. I think it is very important that women and minorities who have professional skills and an interest in USDA should get on a civil service register. That's the first step for anyone on the outside. For people who are already working in the Department, I would advise them to do their jobs well. I have no guilt feelings in saying that I don't think anybody should move forward if they are not able to perform the job. Because it just is not going to help them. It's being programmed for failure. On the other hand, I think that administrators should sometimes think in terms of basic qualifications. In other words, I believe that the qualifications for some positions should be made less technical. If a person has a Ph. D. in economics, for example, it's a matter of technicality whether it is in agricultural economics or not. I think that perhaps the best advice I could offer any employee is to take advantage of every opportunity to learn. There are all kinds of training programs and internships available almost for the asking. It behooves all employees to let their supervisors know the kinds of things they (employees) would like to learn and to indicate that they are interested in moving up. The burden then becomes the manager's. If an employee does his job well and has made clear that he or she wants to move forward, then that person might be chosen when the time comes for selecting high-potential personnel or for recommending someone for an exchange program.

Q. USDA has never had a black assistant secretary before in its 115-year history. Would you care to comment on remarks that yours is a ceremonial position?

A. I think I said very clearly at my swearing-in ceremony that I have no intention of being a token. I really believe that Secretary Bergland is sincere in his commitment to equal employment opportunity. I think it is evident in the cadre of assistant secretaries this Department has—another woman, a Chicano, and a number of people who are not the usual group of assistant secretaries. I

Happiness Is . . . USDA's Rental Program

About 20,000 low-income residents throughout the United States will find the going a bit easier this year as the result of a new USDA program.

Financed by the Farmers Home Administration, the program is designed to ease the burden of low-income tenants—as well as senior citizens—so that they will not have to pay more than 25 percent of their annual income for rent.

Under the program, FmHA will pay everything over the 25 percent of income that a family pays for rent. The money will be given directly to the tenant's landlord—not to the family itself—to bring about a rent reduction, and in some cases, a reimbursement of a tenant's utility expenses. FmHA estimates that payments for individual families will average about \$850 a year.

To qualify for the program, families must live in a rental housing project financed by FmHA, and, as indicated, pay rent that exceeds 25 percent of their annual adjusted income. That income may not be more than \$10,000 a year. In Hawaii and Guam, the income limit is \$12,200 a year, and \$15,000 in Alaska.

Landlords, on the other hand, to qualify for the program, must operate apartment units (financed by FmHA) on a limited or nonprofit basis. Existing apartments now operated for profit which convert to limited or nonprofit operations are also eligible for rental assistance.

believe the Secretary means what he says and intends to extend his commitment to the implementation of affirmative action. I have never before been in a ceremonial position, and I couldn't accept one now.

Q. What's the most satisfying thing that has happened in your career?

A. In terms of memorable experiences I would have to say my swearing-in ceremony in the USDA Patio ranks among the highest. The thrill of seeing so many friends from the past was really a heartwarming experience. It sort of renewed the commitment I had to do an outstanding job. When you know that people are behind you, it makes any job feel worthwhile. There were many people from different places who were either childhood friends of mine, or my parents' friends, and others who helped make it possible for me to prepare for the job at hand.



Residents of this housing project in Scappoose, Ore., may be eligible to participate in FmHA's new rental assistance program.

According to FmHA, about 20,000 low-income rural families will benefit from the program the first year, with thousands more added as the program progresses. The agency anticipates that within 3 years all eligible families throughout the country will have an opportunity to participate in the program.

The first persons to participate in the program are 29 senior citizens in New Prague, Minn. They are all older than 62 and are tenants in the Liberty Park Apartments. Most of them depend on social security checks as their primary source of income.

Soon to join the residents of New Prague in paying lower rents under the program are low-income tenants in rural areas of North Dakota and Nebraska. In Crawford, Neb., seven units of the 18-unit Ponderosa Settlement, Inc., have been declared eligible for participation in the program, as has one unit of a fourplex building in Taylor, N. Dak. Rental assistance agreements are being processed for the two areas.

FmHA says that persons interested in participating in the program should contact their nearest local FmHA office.

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Milton Sloane, Editor

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13 Employees Killed in Grain Elevator Explosions



Part of the damage done to grain elevator in Galveston, Tex.

Thirteen USDA employees were killed last year, and four others were injured, in the grain elevator explosions in Louisiana and Texas.

Seven employees died in the explosion at the Continental Grain Company elevator in Westwego, La., while six others died in the Farmers' Export Elevator explosion in Galveston, Tex. Each blast also injured two other USDA workers, all of whom were employees of the Federal Grain Inspection Service.

The explosions were apparently caused by high concentrations of grain dust and unusual weather conditions.

Killed in the Louisiana blast were:

Steven J. North, 27, who joined USDA in July 1975

Nicholas S. Owens, 25, who joined the Department in August 1977

Robert M. Dehl, 25, who began work with USDA in September 1975. He was also supervisor of the FGIS inspection laboratory located in the Continental elevator.

Wilma M. Hendricks, 51 who joined USDA in August 1974. She previously worked in Washington, D.C., for USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service and the Food and Nutrition Service.

Gary A. Purvis, 27, who started work with USDA in February 1976

Kenneth R. Woods, 24, who joined USDA in March 1976

Horace B. Williams, 54, who had been detailed to the Continental elevator from the Baltimore, Md., FGIS field office.

The two employees injured in the Louisiana explosion are:

Albert C. Nelson, 24, with third degree burns over 90 percent of his body; and

Robert A. Evans, 24, whose condition was described as "guarded but stable" following an operation.

Killed in the Texas explosion were:

David C. Belluomini, 26, who was employed by FGIS in July 1977

Nick A. DiPeso, 26, who joined USDA in January 1976, and transferred to the Galveston elevator in April 1977

Eugene A. Stokke, 37, hired by USDA in July 1976, and transferred to Galveston in June 1977

Annette Figaro, 18, who joined USDA in July 1977

Alvin W. Lueders, 25, who was employed by USDA in May 1977

Mark L. Earhart, 23, who joined the Department in June 1977.

LeRoy Priestley, 18, and *Dennis J. Stevens*, 27, were injured in the Texas explosion. Priestley was listed in satisfactory condition with burns; Stevens was listed in fair condition.

James Phelps, FGIS supervisor at Galveston, said that Lueders, Earhart, (continued on next page)



A section of the damaged elevator in Westwego, La.

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and Priestley were overseeing the weighing of grain being unloaded from rail cars when the explosion occurred. The other employees were sampling and grading grain in the laboratory within the elevator.

Phelps added that the FGIS field office—which is only about 200 yards from the grain elevator—was also damaged by the explosion, which blew out windows, ripped away ceiling tile, and disrupted communications and electrical systems. Fortunately, the office was vacant at the time.

Secretary Bergland, in extending his condolences to the families of the victims, said: "We are saddened by the tragedy and its effects on the lives of the employees of the Federal Grain Inspection Service. I want to express my personal sorrow and extend my sympathy to their families." The Secretary also said that several federal agencies are investigating the explosions.

Special Assistant Named For Grain Elevator Safety



John V. Graziano

Secretary Bergland has appointed *John V. Graziano* to direct the Department's investigations of the recent grain elevator explosions.

Graziano, formerly director of the Office of Investigations, was named special assistant to *Leland E. Bartelt*, administrator of USDA's Federal Grain Inspection Service.

Graziano will coordinate and direct special USDA efforts to determine the causes of the explosions and the additional safety precautions that must be taken. He will also develop safety guidelines for USDA employees.

His primary concern will be to analyze the adequacy of current investigations and existing laws and regulations, determine

New Safety Rules Enacted

To Protect Grain Employees

In the aftermath of the grain elevator explosions, USDA has instituted new safety regulations for employees who work at elevator facilities. The regulations identify the 10 most dangerous conditions to occur at grain elevators.

Effective immediately, USDA employees are instructed to evacuate any grain elevator, and to notify their supervisor, whenever—

- the relative humidity inside the elevator is less than 45 percent and the grain dust collection system is out of operation or closed down for service;

- there is fire or smoke in the head-house or grain storage bin;

- there are sparks from foreign objects, metal parts, rotating machinery, mills, grinders, or from nails in shoes;

- there are open flames in the elevator from lighters, matches, cigarettes, pipes, and other sources;

- electric sparks are observed from operating switches, fuses blowing, damaged cables, and other equipment;

- welding, torch cutting, or soldering is being done;

- coffee pots, electric heaters, fans, or portable radios other than government issue are operated by anyone in the open elevator area;

- there are sparks in the unloading pit caused by the spinning wheels of railway engines;

- compressed air is being used to remove grain dust from walls and ledges while other machinery is operating;

- there are excessive fumigant odors.

At the very minimum, the regulations advise, employees are directed to alert their supervisors whenever—

- there is static electricity in the grain elevator

- there are slipping belts on bucket elevators

- there are hot surfaces including light bulbs, hot bearings, or slipping V-belts

- there are moving parts running through grain or dust

- there is unauthorized use of portable lamps in storage bins

- there is poor housekeeping.

Dr. Leland Bartelt, administrator of USDA's Federal Grain Inspection Service, said the regulations also direct FGIS supervisors to be alert for hazardous conditions, to give prime consideration to the safety of USDA employees in making decisions, and to vigorously enforce all safety regulations.

Dr. Bartelt also said the regulations give supervisors the authority to order federal employees out of an elevator facility until all extremely dangerous conditions have been corrected.

who is responsible for enforcing those laws (as well as the current level of enforcement), and to recommend necessary organizational and legislative changes.

In announcing Graziano's appointment, Secretary Bergland said: "The recent explosions at several grain elevators have resulted in a heavy loss of life and property. The employees of the Department have been saddened by the deaths of 13 of our fellow workers and serious injuries to four other USDA employees in these incidents.

"I feel strongly that everything that can be done should be done to minimize the possibility of such an occurrence in the future."



Agencies Urged To Provide Permanent Part-Time Jobs

USDA and other government agencies have been urged to find creative ways to provide additional permanent jobs for people who want part-time employment. President Carter made the request in an effort to attract talented but unused persons into federal service.

The President noted that "part-time workers are an important, but relatively untapped natural resource. Older people, those with family responsibilities, the handicapped, students, and others who are unable to work full-time can be valuable additions to an agency's permanent work force."

In his request, the President directed the Civil Service Commission to coordinate and report on efforts to hire part-time employees.

For the benefit of persons considering part-time employment, *USDA* presents the following questions and answers. The information applies only to part-time jobs. Specific part-time employment opportunities may vary from agency to agency. For more information, write or call the Civil Service Commission, Washington, D.C. 20415. Phone (202) 632-6817.

Q. What is a part-time employee?

A. The Federal Personnel Manual defines a part-time employee as anyone who works a pre-arranged schedule of less than 40 hours a week.

Q. How are hours and work schedules arranged?

A. Employee work schedules are set by each agency according to the organization's needs. To be considered a part-time employee, one need not work the same number of hours each day, nor the same number of days each week. While a part-timer must have a regular schedule, the Comptroller General has ruled that—at least for determining leave eligibility—only part of the work hours need be prescheduled. As little as one hour of any day satisfies this requirement.

Q. How is a part-time employee's pay determined?

A. A part-timer's gross pay is computed by multiplying the employee's hourly rate by the number of hours worked during the pay period. Pay adjustments and withholding amounts are generally prorated according to the amount of gross pay.

Q. How is part-time service credited?

A. Usually, part-time career, or career-conditional, employees receive the same service credit as full-time employees regardless of the number of hours worked. This service credit would be used to compute retirement, date of career tenure, completion of a probationary period, within-grade pay increases, change in leave category, and time-in-grade restrictions on advancement.

One exception to this is that part-time work is prorated according to the percentage of a full-time schedule for purposes of meeting experience requirements. For example, a part-time GS-9 working 20 hours a week works a year and then applies for a GS-11 job requiring at least one year of work experience at the GS-9 level. Because the GS-9 worker only worked half-time, he or she could only count one-half year toward the experience requirement.

Q. What fringe benefits are part-timers eligible for?

A. Part-time employees generally are eligible for the same fringe benefits as full-timers: retirement, health benefits, insurance. Retirement benefits are computed in the same way for both full-time and part-time employees. Service time counts in full—it is *not* prorated.

For health benefits, part-timers pay the same premiums as full-timers, get the same coverage, and benefit from the same government contribution toward the cost of the insurance.

Q. Are part-timers eligible for career development training?

A. For the most part, yes. But for some special training programs, part-time employees may not be eligible because of their limited working schedules. Whenever a part-time employee attends full-time training (such as for 40 hours in a week) he or she is paid as a full-time employee.

Q. What about overtime pay?

A. Part-time employees are generally entitled to receive overtime pay for work over 8 hours a day, or over 40 hours a week.

Q. How do part-time employees earn annual leave?

A. Leave is earned according to the number of years worked:—a part-time employee with less than 3 years of service earns one hour of annual leave for each 20 hours in a pay status;

Per Diem Has Not Changed!

The Office of Operations and Finance has indicated to us that an article in *USDA* (November 23, 1977) incorrectly reported that per diem has been increased for travel to 17 cities.

Despite what we had been led to believe by the Civil Service Commission, the per diem rate for government employees on official travel has **not** been increased. Maximum per diem for food and lodging is still \$35 a day.

The article in *USDA* should have said that the "actual subsistence rate" has been increased. Actual subsistence is the amount an employee may receive for actual expenses incurred (up to a specified sum) when traveling to certain cities or when approved in advance for selected travel situations.

Instead of per diem, the actual subsistence rate has been increased for travel to:

Chicago—from \$43 to \$45
Houston—from \$35 to \$41
San Francisco—\$41 to \$45
Baltimore—\$35 to \$41
Detroit—\$35 to \$42
Las Vegas—\$35 to \$48
Miami—\$35 to \$43
Newark, N.J.—\$42 to \$45
Dallas—\$35 to \$39
New Orleans—\$35 to \$44
Albany, N.Y.—\$35 to \$39
Bridgeport, Conn.—\$35 to \$40
Charleston, W. Va.—\$35 to \$39
Hartford, Conn.—\$35 to \$39
Milwaukee—\$35 to \$39
Minneapolis—\$35 to \$41
Providence, R.I.—\$35 to \$40

In addition, subsistence rates are also in effect—but remain unchanged—for five other cities: Boston (\$49), Los Angeles (\$40), New York (\$50), Philadelphia (\$46), and Washington, D.C. (\$50).

USDA hopes the error will not result in any incorrect travel claims.

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USDA Studies An Unusual Weight-Lifting Method

What would you get if you fed a cow cement dust? A heavier cow, naturally.

Maybe it's not so natural, but in tests at the Agricultural Research Center in Beltsville, Md., scientists have found that feeding cattle cement dust makes them gain more weight than cattle on a dust-free diet. And they do so while eating less feed.

The researchers also found that the dust-fed steers gain weight faster and produce better-grade carcasses than their non-dust-eating relatives. The dust-fed animals, according to the studies, grade an average of "top choice," while cattle fed a different diet averaged a grade of "top good."

Researchers say the dust that causes the cows to gain weight comes from mixing and curing the ingredients used to make Portland cement—limestone, clay, shale, and iron ore. The ingredients are heated to 1500 degrees Celsius, after which about 12 percent is filtered out of the air as dust. The dust, say the researchers, does not have the same characteristics as regular cement in that it does not harden or have

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—an employee with 3 years but less than 15 years of service earns one hour of annual leave for each 13 hours of work;

—a part-timer with 15 years or more of service earns one hour of annual leave for every 10 hours of work.

Q. How is sick leave computed for part-time employees?

- A. Sick leave is prorated according to the number of hours worked. A part-time employee earns one hour of sick leave for each 20 hours of work.

Q. What are part-time employees' rights in a reduction-in-force and in adverse personnel actions?

- A. In a reduction-in-force, part-timers can only compete for other part-time jobs and are not entitled to full-time jobs if there is no part-time job that they can continue working in.

Part-time employees can also appeal serious disciplinary actions taken against them involving removals, suspensions of more than 30 days, furloughs without pay, and reductions in rank or pay. Specifically included among the actions part-timers may appeal is any involuntary reduction in the number of hours a part-time employee is scheduled to work each week. □



Employees of the Forest Service's Eastern Regional Office were among thousands of workers throughout the Department who celebrated the true spirit of Christmas ("Tis better to give than to receive") this past holiday season. The Forest Service employees participated in a charity drive for underprivileged youngsters, sponsored by WTMJ-TV, Milwaukee, in cooperation with the Salvation Army. Above Marcia Kaminski (kneeling) and Jan Bjork (right) of the Eastern Regional Office accept contributions from fellow office workers Doris Nance (far left) and Nella French.

a high alkali content. Around the country, according to the researchers, about 33,000 tons of the dust are collected daily by Portland cement plants. Of that amount, only a small portion is recycled for making cement or used for agricultural liming.

While it's not known exactly why the dust increases weight in cattle, there are several theories, such as those offered by Dr. William E. Wheeler, one of the Agricultural Research Service scientists in Beltsville.

"It could be due to the high temperatures to which the dust is heated; the fineness of the dust (which is about as fine as face powder); or to the mineral content of the dust," Dr. Wheeler theorized. "The dust is high in minerals, particularly calcium (27 percent).

"Research indicates that we have a long way to go in understanding the mineral requirements of livestock," Dr. Wheeler added. "Our control diet was formulated to satisfy all National Research Council recommendations, whereas the dust diet was not. Yet the cattle fed the cement kiln dust had a faster rate of gain than those fed the control diet."

Despite that fact, Dr. Wheeler said, USDA has cautioned farmers against feeding the dust to cattle, pending the outcome of further tests. He also said that he and Dr. Robert R. Oltjen, director of the Meat Animal Research Center in Clay Center, Neb., became interested in the dust when they were contacted by three Georgia farmers. The farmers said

that while liming their pastures they decided to add some of the high-calcium dust to the diet of several of their steers. The farmers then noticed that although the cattle were getting a nutritionally poor diet, the animals gained almost 4 pounds a day.

"We talked with the farmers," Dr. Wheeler said, "and obtained some of the dust from Georgia. We knew the implications would be tremendous if cattle gained as well on controlled diets (using the cement dust) as they did on the farm."

So, for 112 days, an experiment was conducted using two groups of seven steers—averaging 750 pounds—and feeding them separate diets which Drs. Wheeler and Oltjen formulated. At the end of the study, scientists found that cattle fed the cement kiln dust required 21 percent less feed per pound, and gained nearly three-quarters of a pound more each day, than their control group counterparts: the dust-fed steers gained about 3 pounds a day; the control group cattle, a little over 2 pounds.

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USDA Vol. 37, No. 2, January 18, 1978
Milton Sloane, Editor

USDA Commemorates Black History Month

A "Who's Who" of Blacks in American Agriculture

In agriculture, as in other endeavors, blacks have contributed significantly to America's growth and development. From small farm management to large-scale discoveries, black citizens have helped revolutionize the farm system and raised our standard of living. Blacks continue to rank among the dwindling number of U.S. farmers who are rated the world's greatest food producers.

Since February is Black History Month, it seems only fitting to highlight some of the achievements of black agriculturalists.

The profiles, for the most part, were provided by *Joel Schor* of USDA's Economics, Statistics, and Cooperatives Service. Others were adapted from "Black Pioneers of Science and Inventions" by *Louis Haber* (Harcourt, Brace, & World, Inc.). Schor, incidentally, is author of a book on a black abolitionist who saw farming as the basis for blacks' economic progress. The book is entitled, "Henry Highland Garnet: A Voice of Black Radicalism in the 19th Century."

In observance of Black History Month, Secretary Bergland said: "Blacks have made enormous contributions to the security and life of the United States. We, in USDA, should recognize and take pride in those important achievements, including the very significant contributions that black citizens have made to agricultural programs and other related fields."

Reading like a "Who's Who," the list of blacks who have contributed prominently to the quality of American life include:

Dr. George Washington Carver—who discovered over 300 different products that could be made from peanuts, products such as cream, buttermilk, instant coffee, face powder, printer's ink, shampoo, vinegar, soap, and wood stains; over 100 uses for sweet potatoes; hundreds of potential products from

waste materials, such as corn stalks; and close to 100 possibilities for pecans. Dr. Carver also extracted some of the world's most beautiful dyes and paints from the clays of Alabama.

Norbert Rillieux—who revolutionized the sugar refining industry with his invention of the vacuum-pan evaporator. The invention reduced the loss of sugar in processing, saved on labor, and raised the quality of sugar considerably. Rillieux's invention is now used worldwide by the sugar industry as well as by other industries where evaporation of liquids is an essential process. Believed to be years ahead of his time, Rillieux is also credited with inventing many other scientific

devices. Rillieux's father, an engineer, invented a steam-operated cotton-baling machine.

Percy Julian—a soybean chemist who was the first man to synthesize the drug *physostigmine* which is potent in treating glaucoma, an eye disease. Julian also used soybean protein to develop a foam that could be used to put out gasoline and oil fires, and developed synthetic cortisone (for treating arthritis) and other therapeutic drugs. Julian's development of a method to synthesize male and female hormones from the common soybean ranks among the outstanding achievements of organic chemistry.

(Continued on next page)



Dr. George Washington Carver discovered hundreds of different uses for a number of agricultural products. This medallion of the prominent scientist was specially struck for the Bicentennial Research Symposium.

Booker T. Washington—founder of Tuskegee Institute, who assembled one of the finest systems for agricultural education in the country. His Institute pioneered in agricultural research, in training black leaders, and in extension work.

Thomas M. Campbell—the first black extension worker for USDA.

George Bush—one of the most successful pioneer farmers in the State of Washington. Because of their color, the Bush family was excluded from the protection of local land laws. But, by 1879, President Rutherford B. Hayes signed a special law which guaranteed the Bush family their homestead.

William O. Bush—son of George Bush, and a farmer and exhibitor of cereals at the Centennial Exposition of 1876. He won a diploma and bronze medal. He also exhibited at the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893 and at the Pan American Fair in 1901. One of his exhibits was shown in the Smithsonian Museum.



Exhibit in USDA Patio honors achievements of American Blacks in Agriculture as well as in other undertakings as part of Black History Month.

Daniel W. Wallace, better known as "80" John—one of the most respected black ranchmen in the Old West.

Dr. E. B. Evans—former president of Prairie View University and an outstanding veterinarian. His department developed an accredited dairy herd, vaccinated over 2,000 head of cattle in a serious outbreak of anthrax, and prepared scientific papers on foot bandages and the disposal of carcasses.

Other outstanding blacks in agriculture include **William Stith**, who organized poor farmers for the Southern Tenant Farmers Union in the 1930's and 40's, and **Alfred L. Edwards**, former deputy assistant secretary of agriculture. And two years ago, **Dr. Booker T. Whatley** of Tuskegee Institute was honored by USDA as "Outstanding Scientist for 1976" for his work in small plant breeding, particularly with sweet potatoes. □

Restrictions Imposed by Freedom of Information Act

In a memo to agency heads, Secretary Bergland has reiterated the Department's policy regarding the release of employees' names and addresses—without their permission—under the Freedom of Information Act.

In cases involving judgment, or where agencies can use discretion in releasing information, the Secretary stated, it is USDA's opinion that:

- it serves no public interest to release the names and home addresses of Department employees, or farmers, or other persons for commercial purposes
- it is also not in the public interest to release names and addresses for political purposes.
- when it is in the public interest to release certain information, all agency records (except those restricted from disclosure) shall promptly be made available to the person or organization requesting it.

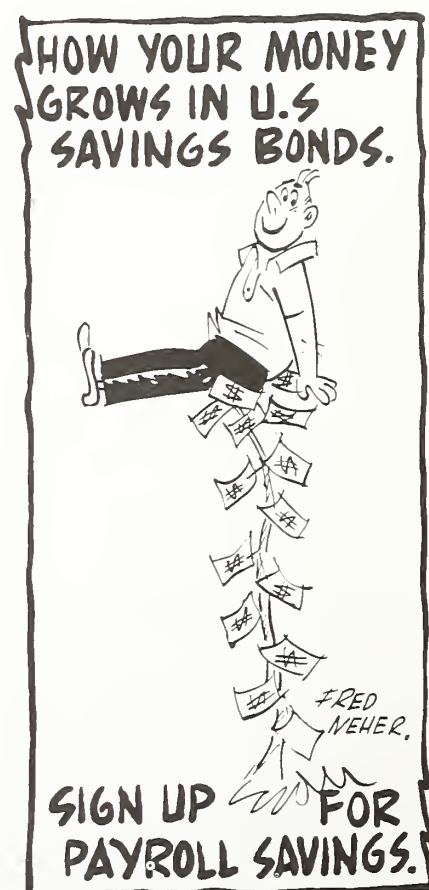
An agency may in its discretion release

information otherwise exempt from disclosure when it is determined to be in the public interest, except where prohibited by law, Executive Order, or regulations.

Agencies may also give out an employee's name and address if authorized to do so by the employee involved.

Secretary Bergland said it would also be the policy of the Department "to assume that requests for lists of names and addresses by Members of Congress are for purposes of education or dissemination of information. When providing any such list to Congress, USDA employees should inform the Member that we are notifying the Federal Elections Commission of our cooperation and remind the Member that the list cannot be used for political purposes."

Furthermore, the Secretary said, when such lists are supplied to Members of Congress employees should assess a fee—according to the scale published in federal regulations—for duplicating and collating the information.



Some Who Are Doing Something About Their Future

"I had never been near a horse before, a cow, or any of those animals," *Velma Campbell* exclaimed. "One thing I've learned is to tell the difference between the breeds, because to me a cow is a cow."

"You have to be alert for different things," *Kristy Burns* remarked. "You never get bored in this job."

"At the office at the end of the day," *Sherrelynn Pitts* noted, "you go home with the office on your mind—thinking 'I've got to get this out by tomorrow.' But at the plant, that cow you see today you won't see anymore, unless you see it on your table."

Campbell, Burns, and Pitts were commenting on their experiences as participants in an upward mobility program designed to enable them to become food inspector trainees. The program is offered by the Food Safety and Quality Service in its meat and poultry inspection regions.

Campbell, Burns, and Pitts are among seven FSQS employees undergoing the intensive training that will take about a year to complete. The others are *Rick Adamson*, *Doris Smith*, *Minnie Wisner*, and *Sue Ellen Winston*. Adamson and Pitts are from the FSQS Southwestern Region (with headquarters in Dallas); Campbell and Burns from the Western Region (Alameda, Calif.); Smith and Wisner from the Northeastern Region (Philadelphia); and Winston is from the North Central Region (Des Moines, Iowa).

All are former clerks, typists, receptionists, or computer aides, who share an interest in the challenging career of food inspection.

Already into their training period, the participants are developing basic knowledge of the animal food industry and receiving on-the-job training in meat and poultry plants.

At the plants, the trainees have been placed under the supervision and instruction of the veterinary medical officer assigned as inspector in charge. They spend part of the day studying independently; the rest of the day performing tasks assigned by the supervisor.

The tasks provide realistic training and experience with animals and food products and, at the same time, result in a use-



Trainee Sherrelynn Pitts learns basic livestock and poultry science using audio-visual equipment. . .

. . . then watches inspector examine head of cattle for parasites and disease.



ful fringe benefit—much-needed support service to the regular inspection staff.

In accordance with federal regulations, however, the trainees are never allowed to replace a regular inspector or to make any decision regarding the disposition of food products.

At the end of the training year, the employees who have performed acceptably will be placed in a new job series—Series 1863—and begin working as GS-5 Food Inspector Trainees. Upon successfully completing a year in that position, the workers may be promoted to a GS-7.

"Normally," explains *Dr. Carl S. Johnson*, upward mobility project officer for FSQS, "a person entering the 1863 series must pass a civil service exam and meet certain requirements in the livestock food production industry."

"Many ambitious and productive employees simply lacked the experience necessary to meet civil service requirements for entry into the food inspector series. They were locked into lower-grade positions at the top of their career ladders."

(Continued on next page)



Some of the many employees who have participated in USDA's pioneering workshop in real property held in St. Louis, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C.

(Continued from page 3)

But now, with intercession by the Civil Service Commission, at least seven such employees have an opportunity to move up. The Civil Service Commission reviewed upward mobility programs originally offered by the meat and poultry inspection regions. CSC criticized the earlier programs for not allowing lower-grade employees the opportunity to enter the 1863 series.

Dr. Johnson emphasizes that the current program is not designed "to teach the trainees to be food inspectors. The year is devoted only to making the trainees equivalent to people entering the 1863 series on the basis of background, experience, and examination test score."

And not all of the training is ultra-serious. "Once," beamed trainee Burns, "I was working on the line with an inspector at a poultry plant. One of the other inspectors went up the line and put a rubber chicken in a shackle among the real ones. Then he waited for it to get to me to see if I could tell the difference!"

"Inspection procedures are interesting," trainee Pitts says. "In poultry inspection you observe and palpate (examine a carcass and viscera by touch). In red meat inspection there's a lot of cutting and having to know where all the lymph nodes and organs are. The most difficult thing to learn is the different diseases and how to detect them."

Dr. Johnson is convinced, from comments received from the trainees and their supervisors, that "we have one of the most effective upward mobility programs in all of government. Our records for the first half of the year indicate that we are going to very closely approximate the Civil Service Commission's knowledge and experience requirements for the 1863 job series."

If there's one key to the success of the program, it is probably the designation of the inspector in charge as the trainees' on-the-job supervisor. The supervisors become so interested in the trainees that they provide supplemental reading and training materials from their personal libraries.

"The degree of involvement by the on-the-job supervisor," Dr. Johnson concludes, "is the real key to the success of this program. This program could not have accomplished what it has without the supervisor's direct assistance."



A REAL EYE-CATCHER

A training program designed specifically for USDA employees has caught the eye of at least three other government agencies. The Departments of Labor, Treasury, and Health, Education and Welfare have expressed keen interest in USDA's real property workshop.

The first of its kind in government, the workshop was designed by USDA to help employees negotiate and administer leases and real property programs for the government. Since USDA occupies over 45 million square feet of space, at a cost of over \$65 million, the workshop should provide substantial benefits.

Conducted by the Office of Operations and Finance, the workshop covers office leasing procedures, needs for the handicapped, energy conservation in leased facilities, as well as other subjects. Thus far, the workshop has been held in three regions, in the cities of St. Louis, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C.

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\$2,500 To Be Given Each Year To Retiree

A check for \$2,500 will be awarded annually to the Federal Retiree of the Year by the National Association of Retired Federal Employees. The award will be given in cooperation with the Civil Service Commission.

NARFE said the award aims to recognize outstanding achievements, and increase public knowledge and appreciation of the accomplishments of public servants.

Competition is open to any federal civilian worker who retires on immediate annuity with at least 25 years of service, including military.

The first award, to be presented in April, will honor an outstanding career employee who retired during 1977.

Additional information about the award can be obtained from NARFE, 1533 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

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Milton Sloane, Editor

Reserve
Ag 844

Employee Newsletter
of the U.S. Department
of Agriculture

'USDA'

Volume 37
Number 4
February 15, 1978

USDA Actions Speak Louder Than Words When It Comes to Helping Farmers

During the past year, the government completed a host of major actions to strengthen farm prices and to help farmers achieve a more reasonable return on their labor and investments—in the long run.

Without great fanfare, USDA last year established higher wheat, feed grain, and cotton target prices, and increased dairy price support payments.

On April 4 of last year, the Department established a farmer-owned wheat and rice reserve program for 1976 crops, and agreed to pay storage costs if farmers would hold the crops. Also last April, USDA increased the loan rates (the amount farmers may get from the government when borrowing against their crops) for corn to \$1.75 per bushel, sorghum to \$1.70, barley to \$1.50, oats to \$1, rye to \$1.50, and soybeans to \$3.50. Commodity interest rates were also reduced from 7-1/2 to 6 percent.

Again April 4, 1977, USDA reduced the interest rate on loans to build farm storage facilities from 7-1/2 to 7 percent, increased the maximum loan amount to \$50,000, and cut the down payment requirement in half to 15 percent.

Other actions which USDA and the government took to strengthen farm income included:

May 4—directed that \$469 million in emergency drought assistance be made available to food producers.

June 2—proposed that cooperatives be allowed to participate, on behalf of their members, in price support loan programs for wheat and feed grains.

July 20—expanded the farm storage facility program to authorize loans for specialized storage structures, to benefit dairymen and livestock feeders who need storage for high moisture grain and silage.



August 15—extended wheat and feed grain loans for 2-1/2 months to give farmers more marketing flexibility.

August 16—authorized an additional \$50 million in federal drought assistance.

August 25—extended the repayment schedule of loans to build new farm facilities from 5 years to a maximum 8 years.

August 29—announced creation of a 30-35 million metric-ton food and feed grain reserve.

August 31—increased feed grain loan rates (again, the amount farmers may

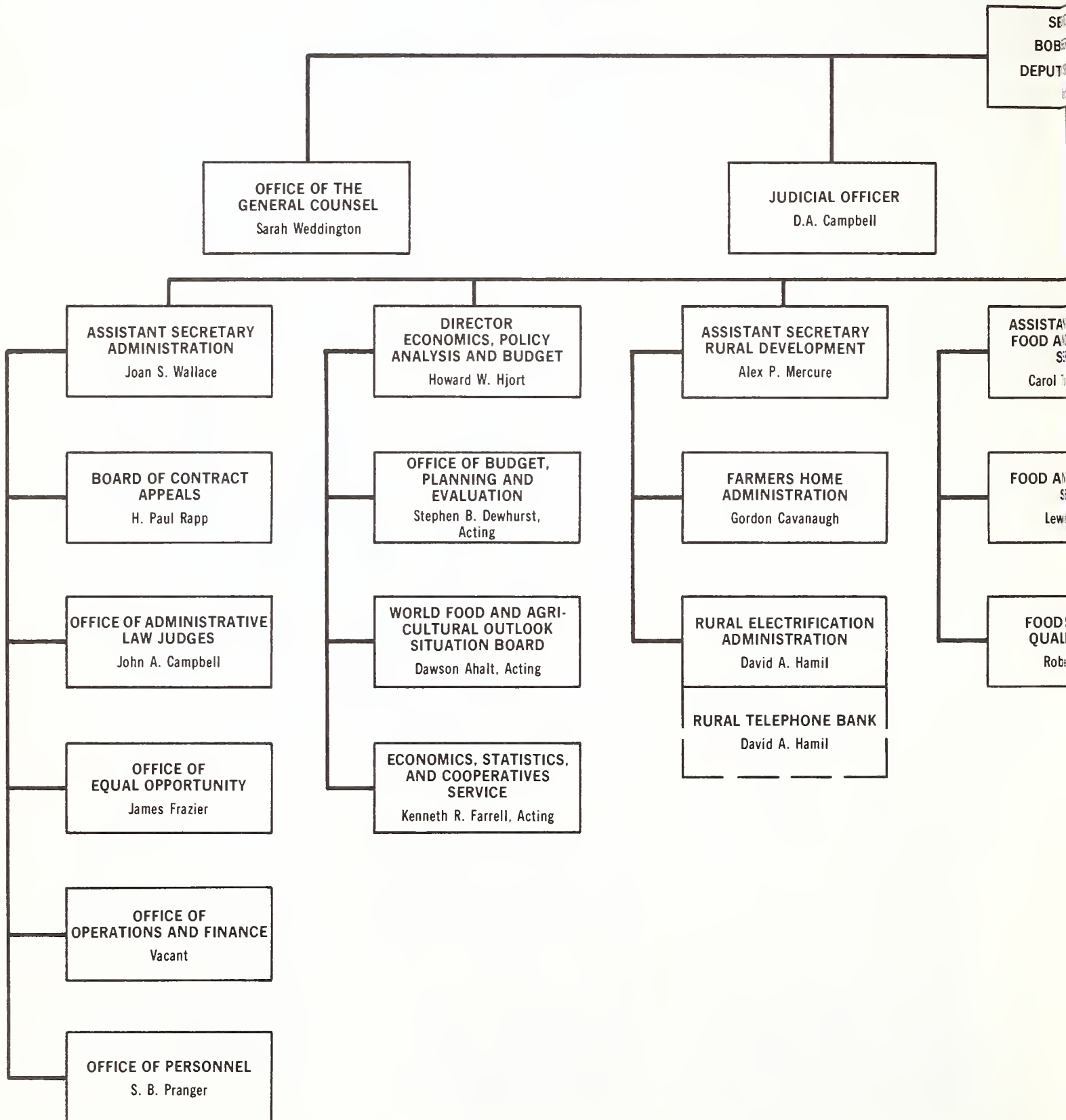
borrow against their crops) for corn to \$2 per bushel, sorghum to \$1.90, barley to \$1.63, oats to \$1.03, and rye to \$1.70.

September 2—made loans available on 100 percent of the commodity stored on farm. Before, only 90 percent of the on-farm grain was eligible for loan.

September 29—President Carter signed the 1977 Food and Agriculture Act into law. The law adds more than \$800 million to deficiency payments to be made to wheat farmers for the 1977 wheat crop.

(Continued on page 4)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



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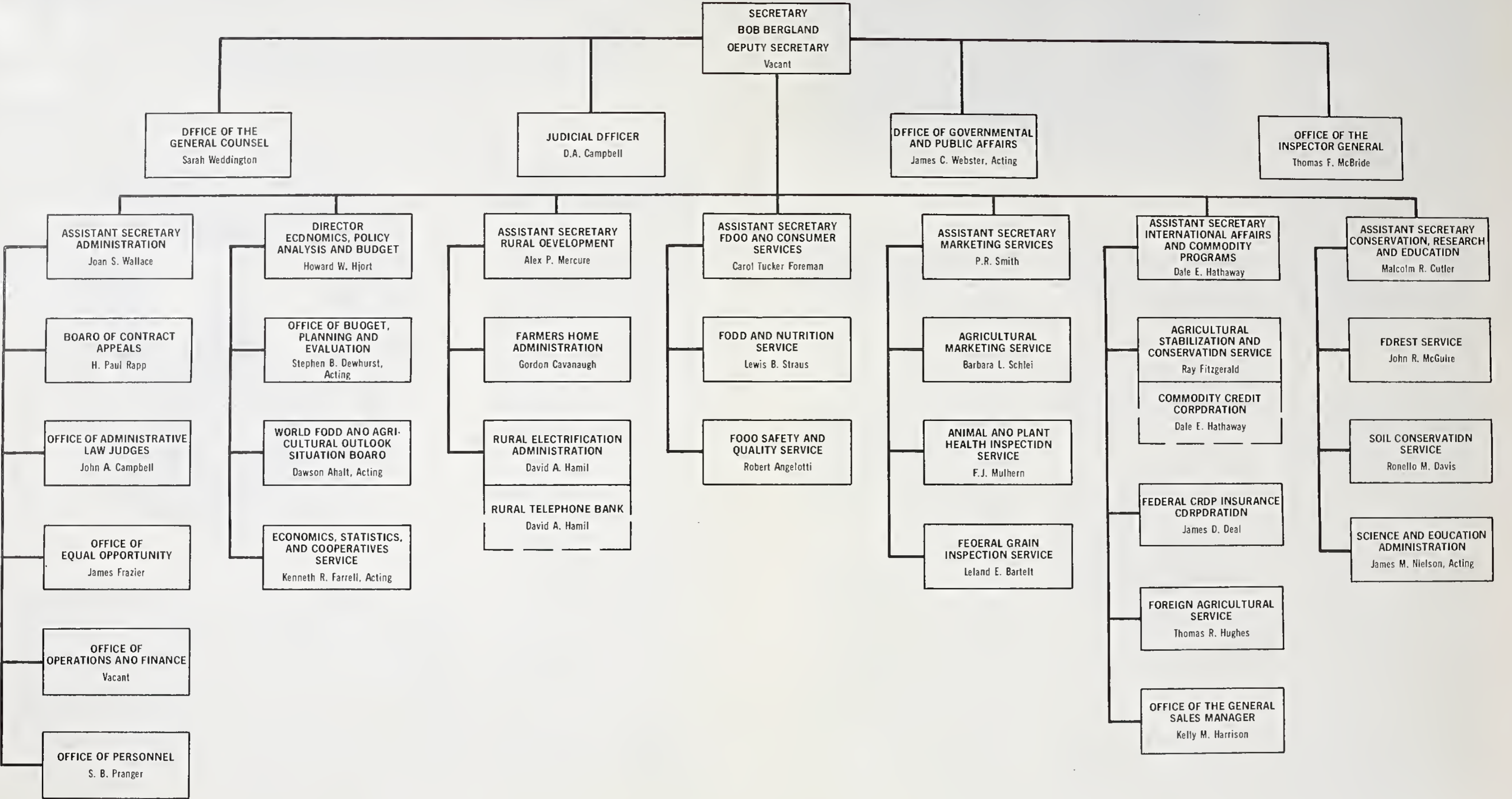
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



Yours For The Asking

Each spring—somewhere between the last of March and the last of April—is Cherry Blossom Time in Washington, D.C.

The exact dates for this eagerly-awaited event depend on when the Japanese flowering cherry trees bloom. Many thousands of visitors are drawn to the Capital to view the blossoming trees that surround the Tidal Basin, dot the edges of Potomac Park, cluster on the Washington Monument grounds and turn these and other areas of the city into a pink-tinted fairland.

Just in time for this year's blossoming, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has published a detailed account of the origin and history of the cherry trees, a gift to the United States from Japan.

Written by **Roland M. Jefferson** of the National Arboretum and **Alan E. Fusonie** of the Science and Education Administration, the booklet tells the story of the diplomacy which took place between Japan and the United States in the early 1900's in order to introduce the trees into this country. It all became a little touchy when the first shipment of trees in 1910 had to be destroyed because of insect infestation, among other things.



First shipment of Japanese cherry trees arriving in the United States on January 6, 1910.

The booklet includes biographical sketches of the officials and scientists who worked together to establish the cherry trees in America and tells of the latter-day events that have added interest and importance to the living gift.

Single free copies of "The Japanese Flowering Cherry Trees of Washington, D.C." may be obtained from the Office of Governmental and Public Affairs, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

(Continued from page 1)

September 30—directed the Farmers Home Administration to halt all foreclosures on farmers' property based on default of payments, pending a three-month study. (During fiscal 1977, FmHA emergency loans totaling \$1.1 billion were made to nearly 36,000 farmers, the largest emergency loan volume in history.)

October 5—the President announced a program to assure sugar growers 13.5 cents per pound, raw sugar equivalent.

October 14—announced a 20 percent set-aside program for the 1978 wheat crop.

November 15—announced a conditional 10 percent set-aside program, and national program acreage, for 1978 corn, sorghum, and barley crops.

December 1—announced final rules for set-aside and normal crop acreage provisions for 1978 programs, allowing grazing on set-aside acreage for six months of the year.

December 1—began mailing wheat deficiency payment checks to U.S. farmers. These will ultimately total \$1.2 billion and help offset losses resulting from low prices. (As of February 3, 1978

over 1.5 million checks worth over \$900 million had been mailed to farmers.)

December 6—expanded the grain reserve program to include feed grains from the 1976 and 1977 crops, as well as from the 1977 wheat crop.

December 30—President Carter announced an additional \$200 million in farm export sales credits to Poland, bringing total sales credits to a record \$1.7 billion for fiscal 1978.

January 12, 1978—announced target price levels for 1977 barley (\$2.15) and grain sorghum (\$2.28) production. Over \$500 million in payments to farmers will be made starting in April. Farmers will receive a 50-cent per bushel payment on barley and about a 38-cent per bushel payment for grain sorghum.

January 12, 1978—Ambassador Robert Strauss signed an agreement with Japan to increase quotas on U.S. beef and citrus exports.

February 8—made final the conditional 10 percent set-aside program for 1978 feed grains.

February 8—increased storage payments for major grains held in farmer-owned reserve program from 20 cents to 25 cents per bushel (19 cents for barley). Farmers now storing grain in the reserve

will be offered new contracts reflecting the higher rate.

These government actions mean, Secretary Bergland said, opportunities for farmers themselves to increase their incomes. Farmers can, he said, make full use of the loan programs and take grain out of the market (temporarily), they can place excess grain into the farmer-owned reserve, and they can use the set-aside program, which will result in fewer acres being planted and less grain harvested, reducing oversupplies.

It's an ongoing process, with new measures being taken all the time. For example, as this story was being prepared there was considerable activity in the Congress directed toward additional farm legislation. And the Department itself can utilize existing authority to raise farm income further if necessary.

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Milton Sloane, Editor

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DC BRANCH

Employee Newsletter
of the U.S. Department
of Agriculture

'USDA'

Volume 37
Number 5
March 1, 1978

USDA Gets New Assistant Secretary

Former farmer and businessman, **P. R. "Bobby" Smith** has been confirmed as Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Marketing Services. He was confirmed by the Senate on February 24, the day before his 53rd birthday. Smith had been nominated for the position by President Carter.

Smith replaces **Robert H. Meyer** who resigned last fall.

For the past year, Smith has been a consultant to Secretary Bergland, primarily for cotton, tobacco, and energy policy. As assistant secretary, he is responsible for programs administered by the Agricultural Marketing Service (which now includes the Packers and Stockyards Administration), Federal Grain Inspection Service, and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. He also serves as a director of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation.

Born in Barrow County, Ga., Smith owned and operated a 2,000-acre farm at Winder, Ga., before arriving in Washington. He also operated a cotton ginning and warehousing firm and a seed processing company.



Smith (center) is sworn in as assistant secretary for marketing services by Secretary Bergland. Looking on is Mrs. Smith.

Smith has long been active in farm organizations and has served as vice president of the Georgia Farm Bureau Federation, and as president of the Georgia Seedsmen Association

and the Southern Cotton Growers Association. He is a member of the Cotton Warehouse Association of America, and the Board of Regents of the University Systems of Georgia.

New Hiring Rules Proposed

New guidelines for testing job applicants and for selecting employees for federal jobs have been developed by the Civil Service Commission in conjunction with three other agencies.

The guidelines are aimed at protecting an individual's rights in being

hired and promoted on the basis of job-related standards, without regard to sex, race, or ethnic background.

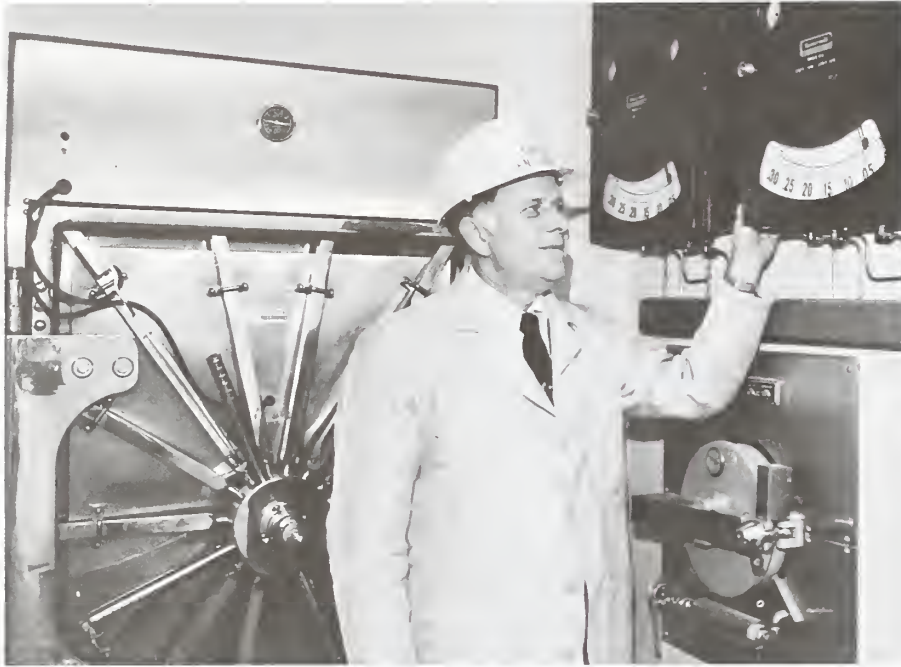
Developed by CSC, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the Departments of Labor and Justice, the guidelines result from a Supreme Court decision that employers justify the use of tests or other selecting procedures which

disproportionally exclude women and minorities.

Under the proposed guidelines, any selection process which adversely affects members of a particular sex, race, or ethnic group must be validated, or shown to be job-related. If the process is not shown to be

(continued on back page)

"I Have The Greatest Job In The World"



Standing in front of steam sterilizer, Kennedy checks equipment which controls the amount of air leaving each research unit.

Kennedy also checks "enunciator panel" which shows the correct and incorrect operation of laboratory equipment. When equipment is not operating properly, an area of panel lights up.



John R. Kennedy has "the greatest job in the world." He is responsible for maintaining a system that protects insiders from outsiders, outsiders from insiders, and insiders from themselves.

And in the process, keeps what amounts to a small city operating smoothly.

Kennedy is chief engineer of the National Animal Disease Center, where he has worked for the past 20 years. Located two miles outside of Ames, Iowa, the center is one of the world's most modern research facilities, specializing in the study of livestock and poultry diseases. Situated on 351 acres, the high-security research center resembles a small city, with everything from manicured lawns to community service facilities including a power plant, water tower, and a sewage treatment plant. The center has 105 buildings with over 500,000 square feet of space that are equal in area to five city blocks.

The chief goal at NADC is to diagnose, prevent, control or eradicate domestic animal disease. The center is designed so that over 20 different animal diseases can be studied at the same time.

To conduct its work, the center is equipped with an amazing safety system to prevent the escape of contagious disease agents into the outside air and to other individual laboratories, and to protect the laboratories for the scientists and animals from the outside environment.

The system provides a continuous supply of clean air and removes biological agents from exhaust air.

Simply defined, the system traps, filters, and purifies the air with the aid of special filters and employs a negative air pressure system. The filters prevent bacteria from traveling to different environments, while the negative air pressure system allows air inside to go out, but keeps air outside from coming in. For added safety there are plumbing facilities in each laboratory so

(Continued on next page)

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employees conducting research can shower and change clothes. In addition, the sewage treatment plant is used to sterilize all liquid wastes prior to their release into the city sewerage system, while a solid waste disposal system is used to incinerate animal carcasses and other contaminated wastes.

The system at Ames is similar to the one originally built at the Plum Island Animal Disease Center in Greenport, N.Y. Kennedy's job is to make sure the Iowa system operates properly. It is this responsibility to eliminate trouble and to check the equipment so that the system does not malfunction.

At NADC, Kennedy keeps track of miles of water pipes, electric conduits, and metal ducts that comprise the controlled-air system and manages as many utilities and services as those used by a small city. He also assists in designing new facilities and equipment needed by researchers, and supervises 74 employees, from an engineer, draftsmen, welders, electricians to refrigeration mechanics, boiler plant operators, roofers, masons, and machinists.

Besides feeling his is the greatest job in the world, Kennedy says "it is the most varied engineering position anywhere. You work across the board in various phases of the field, such as in civil, mechanical, electrical, and structural engineering. It is really a multidisciplinary position."

Among the people who work closely with Kennedy are USDA employees **Dr. James F. Sullivan**, NADC safety officer; and foremen **Thornton Elliott**, who heads the boiler plant and waste treatment unit; **Leo Sutherland**, who heads the shops and utilities unit; **D. Reinertson**, head of the central research unit; and **Lawrence Gardner**, head of the buildings and grounds unit.

In honor of his diligence at Ames, Kennedy was recently named a Certified Plant Engineer by the American Institute of Plant Engineers. An

organization of about 6,000 members, AIPE only has 608 who are CPE's. Kennedy is the first person in USDA's Science and Education Administration to receive the honor. He is "very proud of the award," he says, "after nearly 30 years in the business" and is a charter member and founder of the AIPE Central Iowa Chapter.

When Kennedy is not keeping NADC in top shape, he keeps himself

fit by playing golf and pushing a lawn mower.

As an Air Force pilot during World War II, Kennedy was shot down over Hamburg, Germany, while on his 24th bombing mission. He was captured and made a prisoner of war for almost a year.

His award for diligence that time—the Purple Heart. □

The Russians Are Here!

Employees at USDA's Forest Products Laboratory were hosts to a group of Russians visiting the United States to learn about forestry research. The group included specialists in both wood and concrete materials. The program is part of an exchange agreement run by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Under the agreement, specialists from the United States will visit the Soviet Union to gather information that will eventually determine in which fields, if any, a mutually beneficial program can be arranged.

Located in Madison, Wis., the Forest Products Laboratory is the national center for wood processing and wood product research. It is maintained by the Forest Service in cooperation with the University of Wisconsin.



William D. Godshall, (back to camera) Forest Products Laboratory packaging expert, explains a test procedure to visiting Russians. The visitors are (left to right) Vladimir Trambovsky, senior researcher; Sergey Kubasskiy; Yevgeniy Shubin, chief engineer; Viktor Oistavnov; and Aleksandr Voznesenskiy, deputy chief.

Secretary Bergland held a number of press conferences in the Great Plains and Midwest recently to explain details of the new farm bill, such as the set-aside program and the farmer-owned grain reserve. Here he answers press queries in Lincoln, Neb.



PEOPLE

Three USDA officials and two members from outside the Department have been appointed to the board of directors of the Rural Telephone Bank. They are **Alex Mercure**, assistant secretary for rural development; **Clifford Ouse**, special assistant to Secretary Bergland; **Sarah B. Weddington**, USDA general counsel; **Eileen G. Grevey**, public service commissioner from New Mexico; and **Robert L. Stanton**, president, Rock Port Telephone Company, Rock Port, Mo.

The board consists of 13 members representing the federal government, the telephone industry, and the general public.

Four Is About Average For Most Federal Workers

Federal employees with access to agency health units averaged nearly four visits a year during fiscal 1976, a report on occupational health has stated. Total cost for the visits was \$52 million, for a cost per employee of \$32.

datory physical exams to determine fitness for duty were performed three times as often as voluntary health examinations and that of the 1.8 million federal employees covered by the report, 1.6 million had access to occupational health facilities. □

The report also stated that man-

HIRING RULES

(from page 1)

valid, or the adverse effect is not eliminated, the employer could be subject to government action. Adverse effect refers to a substantial difference in selecting rates for two or more groups.

In choosing a selecting procedure, the guidelines state, employers must make a reasonable effort to identify alternatives which might have lesser adverse effect.

The proposed guidelines would replace selection standards in effect since November 1976. □

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Milton Sloane, Editor
Sharon Edwards, Editorial Assistant



In ceremonies on Capitol Hill, Secretary Bergland signs a document officially declaring the United States free of hog cholera, the most costly and destructive swine disease ever to exist in this country. A native American disease, hog cholera was eradicated following a 15-year cooperative federal-state-industry effort. Flanking Secretary Bergland at the signing ceremonies were Congressman Jamie Whitten, left, and Mark Andrews. Also present (back row, left to right) were Congressmen Dawson Mathis, Charles Whitley, John Jenrette, Jr., James Leach, and Charles Grassley.

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Employee Newsletter
of the U.S. Department
of Agriculture

'USDA'

Volume 37
Number 6
March 15, 1978

YACC in Action



"It's great. I am working outdoors with guys and girls my own age and we love it."

"It beats pumping gas or pushing hamburgers. You get to see a job done."

Those are just two of the comments from the 473 youths enrolled in Arizona and New Mexico in the Forest Service's Young Adult Conservation Corps Program. The program provides year-round jobs for about 8,000 otherwise unemployed youths, between the ages of 16 and 23. The program is in 42 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. In addition to teaching youths skills, the program offers the opportunity to communicate with nature and get paid for it at the same time.

YACC enrollees Elbert Richards, 19, (left), and Judith Kremer, 18, hack out a trail in the steep, rocky terrain of the Superstition Mountains in the Tonto National Forest.



The youths in Arizona and New Mexico have been assigned a variety of outdoor projects on 12 national forests, such as trail cutting, brush clearing, erosion control, fence building, painting, and other activities.

Art Clinchy, information officer on the Tonto National Forest in Phoenix, said that directors of the program feel "the youths are very enthusiastic about their work and are doing a fine job."

John Irish (left), YACC director on the Tonto National Forest, assists Ralph Mueritta, 18, in lining up a guard rail fence post before setting bolts.

First Agricultural Attache Named to East Germany



Roger S. Lowen is the first American agricultural attache ever to be assigned to East Germany. Appointed by the Foreign Agricultural Service, Lowen is on the staff of the U.S. Embassy in East Berlin.

Lowen previously served overseas for USDA and the State Department in Paris, Ecuador, Japan, and Bolivia. He also has worked as an economist in Washington, D.C.

In his new assignment, Lowen is responsible for reporting on agricultural developments in East Germany and for promoting United States farm products there. A growing market for agricultural commodities, East Germany imported over \$35 million in United States farm products in fiscal 1977, compared to only \$10 million two years before.

PEOPLE

Arthur H. Nies, a former administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, has been named Deputy Director of USDA's Science and Education Administration. He will be responsible for the agency's administrative and management functions, an area in which he has wide experience. Besides working for EPA, Nies also held administrative and management positions with the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Professional Group Honors USDA Employees

The Organization of Professional Employees of the Department of Agriculture has honored eight USDA employees for their service to the organization and for recruiting new members.

OPEDA presented a special award to **Richard McArdle** of the Economics, Statistics, and Cooperatives Service and to **Stanley Jepsen** of the Forest Service. McArdle was honored for his long record of OPEDA leadership and continuing service while Jepsen was cited for his many years of arranging agricultural science fairs for high school students in the Washington, D.C. area. Sponsored by USDA and OPEDA, the science fairs are held each year at the Agricultural Research Center in Beltsville, Md.

OPEDA presented plaques to six other employees for recruiting more than 10 new members to the organization. They are **Charles Ferguson** of the Farmers Home Administration, Columbia, Missouri; **J.T. Walker, Jr.**, also of FmHA, Columbia, S.C.; **Lee Tower**, Forest Service, Portland, Oreg.; **Dwight Gadsby**, Economics, Statistics, and Cooperatives Service, Washington, D.C.; **Mitchell G. Hassler**, Soil Conservation Service, Indianapolis, Ind.; and **Claude Greene**, also of SCS, Alexandria, La.

OPEDA also presented its highest member award—the National Honor Award—to **Berny Krug**, who retired from USDA in 1973 but who still edits a newspaper for Washington, D.C. employees.

Soil Scientist Wins Flemming Award

Dr. Sherwood B. Idso, soil scientist at the Water Conservation Laboratory in Phoenix, Ariz., has received the 1978 Arthur S. Flemming Award for his achievements with USDA. Dr. Idso was cited for his innovative research in agriculture-climatic relationships affecting food production.

Dr. Idso's research for improved uses of water and energy resources, fertilizers, and pesticides is attracting interest from scientists around the world. Dr. Idso has also been sought out by several federal agencies for his expert assistance in conducting experiments with dust devils, or miniature dust tornadoes.

The Flemming Award honors outstanding federal employees under age 40 for professional excellence, and community work.

Dr. Idso is very active in community and church affairs and devotes much time to youth organizations.



Dr. Sherwood B. Idso, USDA winner of the Arthur S. Flemming award for research with the Science and Education Administration.



What's Cooking in Costa Rica

As A Result of USDA

Well over a quarter million youngsters in Costa Rica are getting some special nourishment as the result of research initiated by USDA.

It's a delicious-tasting soup made from whole dried peas donated through the Food for Peace Program. Under the program, USDA procures the peas donated to Costa Rica, which each year receives over four million pounds of the commodity.

The soup served to the Costa Rican youngsters is made from 70 percent whole dried peas, seven percent soy-fortified flour, and eight percent nonfat dry milk, all provided by the Food for Peace Program. The remaining ingredients of five percent soybeans, five percent flavoring, and five percent spices come from local Costa Rican producers. A nutritious supplement, the soup is distributed to 386,000 children in Costa Rica in 2,790 public schools.

Under a child feeding program sponsored by the Costa Rican government, each child receives on the average three cups of soup each week. The children like the soup so much that one school director wrote: "On the days the soup is served the children clean their plates."

What makes the soup special is that it is processed by a unique machine called the Brady Crop Cooker. The cooker is a relatively simple, inexpensive machine that allows preparation of large volumes of food at low cost. It is particularly useful in less developed countries where limited resources hamper the feeding of hungry people.

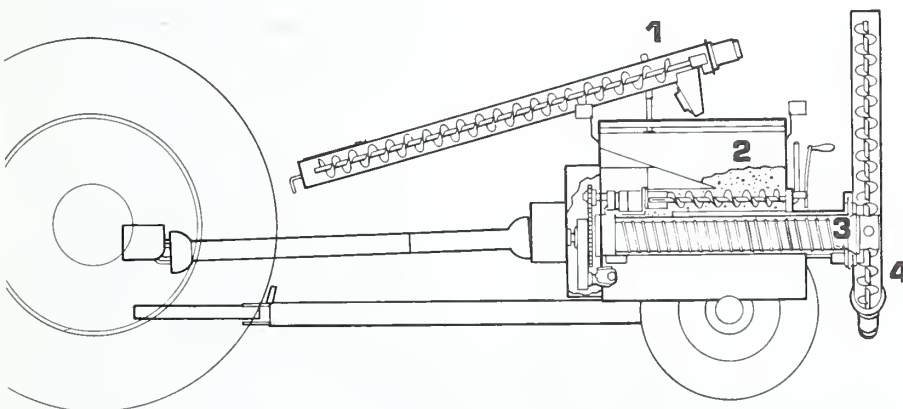
The machine cooks food by friction generated by a compression screw and forces the food through a small opening. When the pea soup, for example, comes out of the cooker, it is cut, cooled, ground into powder, blended with other ingredients, and packaged. The end result is a partially cooked product which one can reconstitute by adding water and heating for about 15 minutes.

Al Lachmann, of USDA's Nutrition and Agribusiness Group, said, "Depending upon design and operation, the cookers can modify the size, shape, texture, and other properties of ingredients cooked in the machine. For instance," he said, "certain types of cookers can convert soy flour into chewy bits and pieces of structured protein which can be made to resemble meat, poultry, and other products with the addition of flavors, colors, and other ingredients."

The cookers can also produce nutritious blended food products as well as snacks such as puffed rice or corn fortified with vitamins and minerals.

USDA initiated research on the low-cost cookers (to process cereal grains and other products for human consumption) after observing them in use to produce animal feed. The Department is continuing to explore potential uses of the machines in several countries. In addition to Costa Rica, countries currently or previously carrying out training, product development or production activities with the machines are Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Guatemala, Kenya, the Philippines, Pakistan, India, Guyana, Mexico, and Bolivia.

Joining USDA in making the soup possible in Costa Rica were the Agency for International Development, CARE, the University of Costa Rica, the Costa Rican Ministry of Health, and the Office of Social Development and Family Assistance.



The extrusion crop cooker above has (1) an adjustable intake auger, hydraulically driven, which carries raw soybeans from storage bin into (2) hopper. By variable hydraulic control, soybeans are metered into (3) extrusion chamber. Cooking temperature and processing rate are adjustable. Cooked meal, ready to feed, is conveyed from the machine by the auger (4).

\$\$\$\$\$

Looking for a little something extra this year? Well, you've got it . . . that is, you will be getting it.

Employees in most government agencies, including USDA, will receive an extra paycheck this year—27 instead of the usual 26. The reason is that the first pay period this year started exactly on January 1. The 27th pay period will run from December 31, 1978, to January 13, 1979.

In addition to the extra paycheck, employees will also earn more leave this year, both annual and sick, as a result of the extra pay period.

Army Officer Received "Basic Training" in USDA

Michelle Cooper is an Army lieutenant who got her "basic training" in USDA.

After graduating from high school in 1972 (in Natural Bridge, Va.), Cooper went to work for the Food and Nutrition Service. She worked for FNS under the stay-in-school program while working toward a B.S. degree at Howard University.

At FNS, Cooper worked for three years as a clerk in the finance division recording payments received from food stamp recipients, voiding and destroying returned coupons, verifying receipt of State funds, and compiling transmittals.

Later, she worked as a nutrition aide with FNS' Nutrition and Technical Services Staff. Under the supervision of **Dr. Lenora Moragne**, Cooper assisted in the coordination and review of nutrition education materials from other agencies and private industry, and aided the development of a nutrition audiovisual list for use with FNS' Women, Infants and Children's Program. She



also answered requests for menu, recipe, and nutrition information for both the general public and the Food Stamp Program.

One of Cooper's outstanding projects was the translation of Spanish nutrition publications into English. When she left FNS, Cooper had advanced from a GS-2 to a GS-4.

Today, Cooper is an ROTC graduate and a 2nd lieutenant in the U.S. Army. Last May, she received her degree from Howard in human nutrition and food, majoring in dietetics and minoring in chemistry and Spanish. Originally, she had planned to major in history, but changed her mind after working for FNS.

Cooper currently is on military assignment to do graduate work in community nutrition at Howard. She plans to transfer to Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, where she will enter a 16-month master's degree program.

Visiting her former co-workers at USDA, Cooper said she is fortunate that she was able to work in FNS and to continue her education at the same time. The stay-in-school program, she said, gave her first-hand experience in working for the federal government and in watching professionals develop quality publications.

Cooper believes that the program can be instrumental in helping other students as long as they keep things in perspective and drive on to reach their goals in spite of adversities.

Forest Service To Train Peace Corps Volunteers

A partnership between the Forest Service and the Peace Corps will help to provide applied forestry skills and knowledge for the world's developing nations.

The Forest Service has agreed to train Peace Corps volunteers in nursery development and reforestation, fire management and control operations, insect and disease identification and control, seed and seedling handling, and even recreation management. The training will be coordinated by the Smithsonian Institution through its Peace Corps Environmental Program.

In addition, the Forest Service will help publicize Peace Corps assignments for foresters.

Forest Service employees interested in becoming Peace Corps volunteers

will be granted leave without pay for the time they are away. When they return they will have a right to a position and a grade at least equal to what they left. Peace Corps service will count towards retirement, and volunteers are eligible for promotion while serving.

"Bone-Yard" News

Want to know why some chicken bones turn dark after cooking and why the meat next to the bones has dark areas?

Well, according to a USDA poultry inspection official, **Dr. Marcus Humphrey**, darkening is a natural condition related to the blood pigment in the bone. It used to be, Dr. Humphrey said, that chickens were not killed or marketed until they were several months old. Now, with modern technology, chickens are

produced and marketed in less than eight weeks.

In these young birds, bones are still rich in blood supply, some of which seeps into adjacent tissue after slaughter. As the bird is cooked, the pink bones and tissue sometimes change to a brownish color, becoming even darker as the temperature increases during cooking.

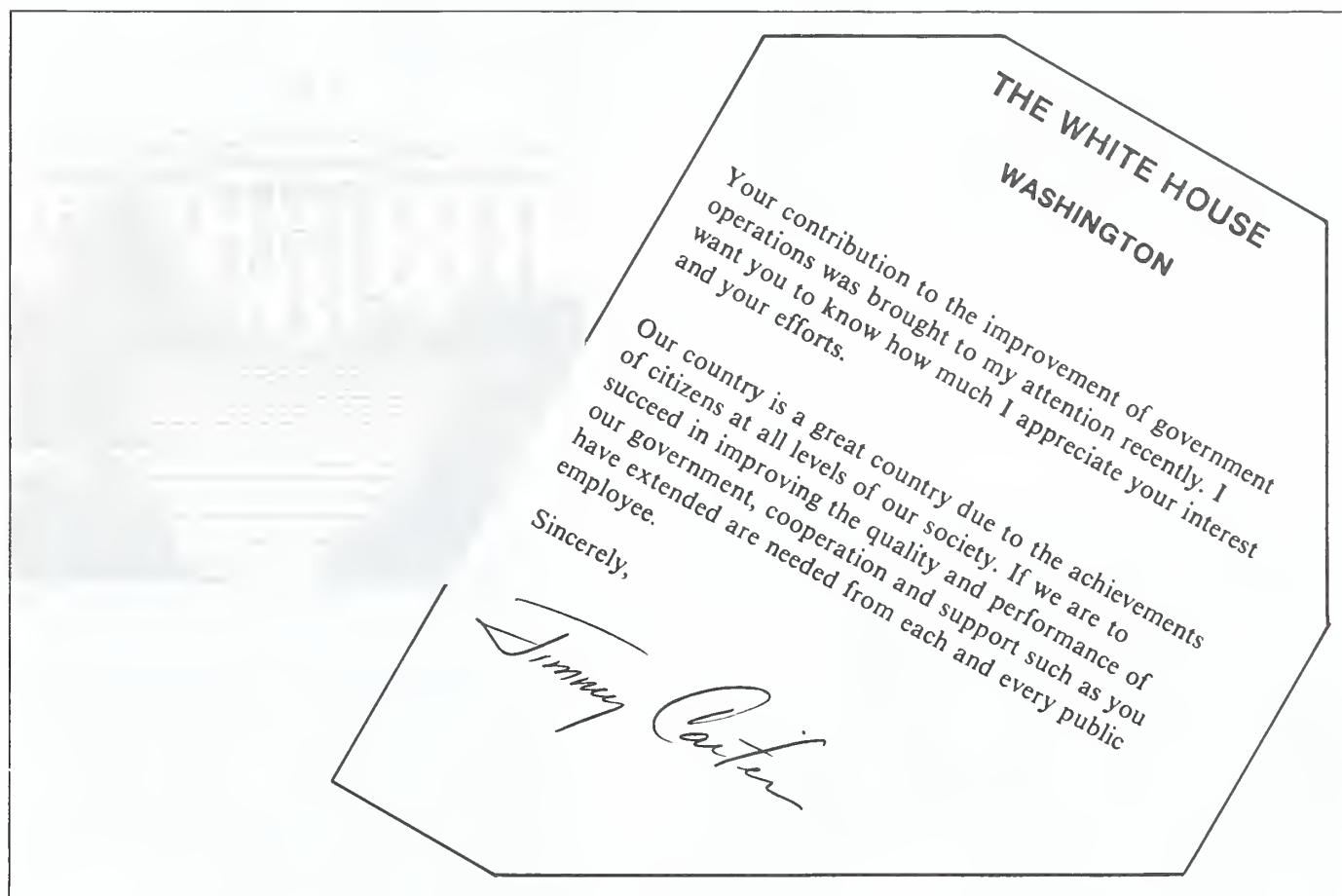
Humphrey said that while the dark appearance may be unattractive, it does not affect the wholesomeness, safety, or flavor of the chicken.

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Milton Sloane, Editor
Sharon Edwards, Editorial Assistant

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President Commends Four USDA Employees



President Carter, in a letter similar to the one above, has commended four USDA employees for their significant contributions to better government. They are **John Barringer**, community development coordinator, for the Rural Electrification Administration; **Richard L. Harris**, director of lands and minerals management, Forest Service, in Albuquerque, N.M.; **Dr. E. L. Corley**, head of program development, Science and Education Administration; and **Theodore R. Gardner**, computer specialist, Food Safety and Quality Service. Barringer, Corley, and Gardner work in Washington, D.C.

Barringer was commended for his assistance to rural electric cooperatives in improving their energy conservation programs. A key member of the Energy Conservation Committee in REA, Barringer helps coordinate the new rural home weatherization program jointly conducted by REA and the Farmers Home Administration.

Corley was commended for his unprecedented work in applying the Zero Base Budget process to developing the fiscal '79 budget, and to improving the efficiency of the Department's research management and operations.

Gardner was commended for improving procedures and reducing costs in the data processing operations of the Federal Meat and Poultry Inspection Program. His cost-control procedures resulted in a direct savings of over \$77,000 for which he earned USDA's Special Achievement Award and a cash bonus of \$1,090.

Harris was commended for initiating arrangements that permitted the federal government to acquire 29,300 acres of western land as payment of estate taxes, following the death of

(cont'd on next page)



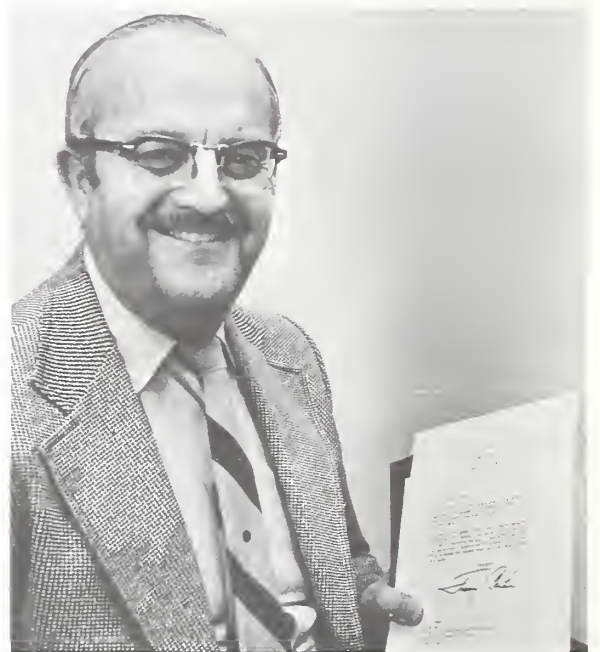
John Barringer (left) accepts Presidential Letter of Commendation from REA Administrator David A. Hamil. Other recipients of Presidential citation are:



... Richard Harris (left), receiving congratulations from Regional Forester M. J. Hassell



... Theodore R. Gardner (right), accepting congratulations from FSQS Administrator Robert Angelotti, and



... Dr. E. L. Corley, SEA

(cont'd from page 1)

the landowner. This was the first time such an action has been accomplished. The rugged mountain land is now part of the Toiyabe National Forest in Nevada. In a letter recommending the Presidential cita-

tion, Secretary Bergland said that "since the outright purchase price would have been prohibitive, we believe Mr. Harris deserves recognition for his idea and special innovative efforts which resulted in significant cost avoidance."

Under the Federal Incentive Awards Program, Barringer, Harris, Corley, and Gardner will be considered for Honorary Presidential Management Improvement awards, presented annually at the White House.

Upward Mobility Trainee Receives High Honor

Adelaide Short, a trainee in the upward mobility program with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, has been named "Woman of the Year" by the New Orleans Federal Executive Board. The board provides a mechanism that enables top officials from various federal agencies in the metropolitan area to coordinate joint activities.

Short is the first woman selected to participate in APHIS' upward mobility program in the South-Central Region. As part of the program, she attends Southeastern University in Hammond, La., where she maintains a 3.5 grade average and has been named to the dean's list.

In January 1977, Short was reassigned from a clerk typist to a plant protection aide.

Short's outstanding progress and enthusiasm in her job earned her a promotion last September and earlier recognition by the Federal Women's Council.



HONOR AWARDS COMMITTEE

The 32nd USDA Annual Honor Awards ceremony will be held June 1, 1978, at the base of the Washington Monument. At the ceremony, Secretary Bergland will present 99 awards to USDA employees for Distinguished and Superior Service. Pictured with the Secretary are members of the Honor Awards Committee (left to right): Dr. Frederick S. Humphries, president, Tennessee State University; Dr. Philip Alampi, secretary, New Jersey State Department of Agriculture; Don Muhm, farm editor, Des Moines Register and Tribune; Assistant Secretary Joan S. Wallace, chairwoman; Secretary Bergland; Ellen Haas, president, Consumer Federation of America; and Charles Bucy, USDA deputy assistant secretary for administration.

Savings Bond Drive Begins

The 1978 Savings Bond Campaign is underway. In a memo to employees,

Secretary Bergland said: "This year's Campaign will be conducted during

the month of April and I am counting on your personal support in helping make it a success.



Secretary Bergland and Assistant Secretary Wallace urge USDA employees to enroll in the Savings Bond Program, or to increase their allotments during this year's Department-wide drive. They point out that "the big bond" remains one of the best investments today.

"Our goals this year are to obtain a minimum of 75 percent participation by all agencies, increase participation by 10 percent for agencies currently at 75 percent or above, persuade 25 percent of present buyers to increase their allotments and purchase higher denomination bonds.

"I have asked Assistant Secretary **Joan S. Wallace** to serve as the Department's Bond Campaign Vice Chairperson. **Verne Bathurst**, Deputy Administrator for Administration, Soil Conservation Service, will coordinate the Campaign."

Secretary Bergland asked each agency head to designate a key staff member to coordinate the Campaign for their agency and to forward his or her name to Bathurst.

USDA's Very Own "Lady" McBeath

Few people ever have the honor to be recognized internationally. **Lida McBeath** has been recognized twice. She is listed in the "World Who's Who of Women" and in "International Poets."

McBeath is a technical editor at the Forest Products Laboratory (Madison, Wis.) who has written a number of poems. One of them is dedicated to **August Dereleth**, a Wisconsin writer who was internationally renowned. Another of McBeath's poems, appropriately enough, is about deer defoliating hemlock.

Since 1966, McBeath has edited numerous technical publications dealing with wood. The publications cover everything from the way fungus attacks trees to the engineering properties of timber and what chemicals can be derived from wood.

She also serves as history coordinator at the lab. Recently she worked on the Forest Service's commemorative picture story



Technical editor Lida McBeath has a way with words. Her fondness for the dictionary began at an early age.

"100 Years of Federal Forestry," compiled historical interviews with long-time FPL staffers, and edited FPL's commemorative book for the Bicentennial, "Wood in American Life."

McBeath began her career in journalism many years ago by writing an indepth article on why women work. She also wrote other articles on cooking, home-making, and child rearing that

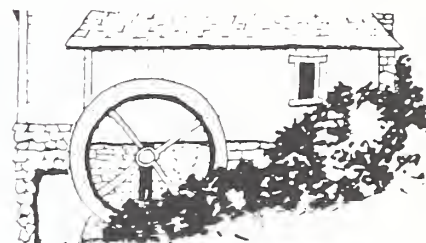
were published in national family magazines.

However, it was McBeath's training in botany that led to her first job at the Forest Products Laboratory. In 1948, she began work as a biological aide preparing and examining wood sections for studies on decay organisms. "I was making 87¢ an hour at first," McBeath recalls. "Then I was promoted and earned an extra half penny per hour."

About her scientific background, McBeath says it has served her well throughout life and recommends that everyone study natural science. "It lends a semblance of understanding to the world we live in," she explains.

Heading into retirement, McBeath says she plans to do some freelance editing and continue to write poetry and general interest articles. She also hopes to have more time to do oil paintings.

□



Some Advice on Retirement

If you are planning to retire soon, you can speed the process along and help avoid delays. The most frequent cause of delays in processing a retirement application is an incomplete or inaccurate record of your total federal service.

When you begin to think about retirement, perhaps a year before, ask your personnel office for a CSC Form 1084, Information in Support of Civil Service Retirement Application. This form, completed by the personnel office based on information in your personnel folder, lists all your federal and military service in chronological order. You should review the form to be certain that all your civilian and military time is included. If not, submit a statement

showing dates, agencies, and locations of the additional service, which can be verified before you submit your retirement application.

Incidentally, completing the CSC Form 1084 in no way commits you to retirement. The form merely makes sure that all your service is accounted for. Only when you retire will you be asked to certify that the record of your government service is fully complete and accurate.

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Milton Sloane, Editor
Sharon Edwards, Editorial Assistant

What To Do If Your Brakes Don't Work

If your brakes ever fail: **pump, park, shift, swipe.** (1) **pump** the brake pedal. Sometimes the pressure comes back. (2) Use the **parking** brake. However, if you are on a curve, don't jam too hard. It can cause a spin. (3) **shift** into a lower gear or lower range on an automatic. The drag of the engine will slow you.

Try all three in quick succession. As a last resort, (4) **sideswipe** something—a guard rail, a curb, or even parked cars. The indirect blow is better than hitting a brick wall or an on-coming car. And damaged metal is better than damaged people!

(Adapted from an SCS newsletter)

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Cap. 2

Dr. Angelotti, USDA's "Chief Inspector," Examines the Meat We Eat

Dr. Robert Angelotti is administrator of the Food Safety and Quality Service. FSQS primarily assures the wholesomeness and safety of meat, poultry, eggs, and egg products through its inspection programs, and helps consumers choose the quality product they want through its grading services. FSQS establishes U.S. grade standards for meat, poultry, eggs, dairy products, and fresh, frozen, canned, and dried fruits and vegetables.

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Q. How serious is the problem of residues in meat from pesticides, antibiotics, and other chemicals?

A. It's a continuing problem to which we are giving increased emphasis. Chemicals are necessary in the production of meat if we are going to continue to have meat in the quantity necessary to satisfy consumer demand. It's our job, however, to see to it that meat going to market does not contain chemical or drug residues above permitted tolerance. The problem is that there are millions of meat animals slaughtered annually in the United States, and there is no way we can analyze every one of them before they go to market to determine whether the residues are within approved government levels. So what we do, instead, is maintain a statistically-designed sampling program whereby we measure the residue levels of animals at slaughter and then estimate from those data what is happening nationally. The system is designed so that we are 95 percent confident that we are detecting over-tolerance meat



whenever the over-tolerance incidence rate is one percent or more. When we determine that a particular animal is over tolerance, we trace the animal back to its farm of origin, and then work with the farmer to improve his animal production practices. Violations are reported to FDA. Currently, there are about 140 chemicals that can occur as residues in edible meat, but we have the capability to test for only about 60 of these in any one year. We don't have enough money or people to look for all 140 drugs simultaneously. In addition, analytical procedures suitable for rapidly and accurately testing for all 140 do not exist. So it's a combination of many drugs, few resources, and a lack of good, quick analytical procedures that prevents us from doing more than we are. We want to do more because we feel that one of the major problems associated with meat today centers on the chemical residue situation. Most analytical techniques now take 10-12 days to

complete in the laboratory. By the time one gets results, the carcass is long gone and eaten. What we need are procedures that can be applied directly in the slaughter plant which can give us an answer about a carcass while it's moving down the line, before it ever leaves the plant. There's a lot of research involved in doing that. That means we are going to have to work harder, make our needs better known, and get better coordination with other agencies that can help us with this problem. It's going to be a long-term effort, but we must get on with it.

Q. How do residues affect consumers?

A. Any number of ways. Pesticides can have chronic, long-term effects on people. Some pesticides are classified as carcinogens. These are rapidly being banned from use in the United States. Other pesticides may affect the nervous system, kidneys, or liver in one way or another. The tolerances for these substances in meat are set by EPA. We enforce the EPA tolerances. Unknown to most people is that there is a considerable safety margin involving pesticides. These tolerances are based on tests made to determine the no-effect level in animals. Once that dosage is determined, it is further reduced to a level deemed safe for humans. The same type of animal testing for establishing tolerance levels is also used for other chemical and drug residues in meat.

—Continued next page

Q. Is bribery of federal inspectors and graders a major problem for FSQS?

A. Whenever you deal with human systems, you are bound to have problems. Certainly there is some bribery and fraud in meat inspection and grading because you're dealing with a product that is terribly expensive and from which a great deal of profit can be made. Decisions by inspectors and graders affect the monetary return for that product. There will always be attempts to influence decisions made by inspectors and graders. Fortunately, most inspectors and graders are honest people and turn aside those kind of influences. But we're always going to have a small portion of inspectors and graders who are going to succumb to temptation. What do we do about it? Well, we try to tighten up our system, improve employee training, emphasize honesty and integrity, and keep bribery to the barest minimum possible. For anyone to say he or she is going to totally eliminate bribery and fraud, in this structure, is terribly naive. We're dealing with frail human systems.

Q. How widespread is the practice of injecting meat with food coloring to "improve" its appearance?

A. With one exception, federally inspected meats are not permitted to be artificially colored. In federally inspected plants, the only colorant that's used is for sausage casings. And even this use is restricted in the amount and types that can be applied. Before a colorant can be applied to a sausage casing, it must be demonstrated that the colorant will not migrate from the casing throughout the meat inside the casing. We do not monitor meat at the retail level and, from time to time, I have read newspaper reports of retailers adding bisulfite to beef or something else to ground beef to make it look better. But the frequency with which that happens is low. Surveillance at retail is normally conducted by local municipal authorities.

Q. Are there any other violations committed in the meat industry?

A. Sure. Poor sanitation, misbranding, improper slaughtering procedures, filth on food, and other things. Meat inspectors are constantly working with plants to correct infractions. They're out there dealing with infractions all the time—every day—thousands each year. And that's why they are there—to see to it that the product that leaves the plant is truly wholesome and not misbranded.



USDA meat inspector closely examines viscera from a carcass slaughtered at processing plant. Viscera examination reveals much about the wholesomeness of an animal, or presence of disease.

Q. Who do food grades benefit most—producers, processors, consumers?

A. Food grades were established under the law—the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946—to enhance trade between buyers and sellers. Food grades represent a common language which wholesale buyers and sellers can use to conduct trade. Through the use of grades, a buyer in New York, for example, can purchase a boxcar of apples from a seller in Tacoma, Wash., and have sound knowledge beforehand of what he is getting. Food grades enable buyers to purchase commodities they want without first having to see them. That's what the Agricultural Marketing Act is all

about. It set up a voluntary grading system to enhance trade and stated that if persons want commodities graded by USDA, they would have to pay for the service. Over the years, the grading system has been applied to more and more commodities and consumers have come to recognize and use the grades. Most consumers today understand the grades for meat commonly seen at retail (prime and choice), but appear to be confused over other commodity grades, such as grade A, AA, Fancy, Extra Fancy, No. 1, etc. That confusion is understandable since the grade designations were originally designed for wholesale trade. Each commodity has its own set of grade designations which characterize certain attributes for that product, and that product alone. We do need to develop a system that can provide consumers information that will help them make knowledgeable choices in the marketplace.

Q. Is it possible then to develop one set of grades that consumers can apply across the board?

A. We are currently looking at the possibilities of developing a uniform set of grades for commodities at retail that will assist consumers. We're looking to see if we can provide grades on labels that have some common meaning and essentially tell consumers the same kind of things, whether they are buying oranges, olives, or eggs. We won't be able to accomplish that, though, without input from consumers, producers, wholesalers, and retailers. The thing we want to be very careful of is that we not destroy the excellent system we have that is used by wholesale buyers and sellers and which does enhance trade.

Q. Is FSQS becoming more of a consumer protection agency as opposed to a producer oriented one?

A. What we are attempting to do is reorient our activities so that they don't just reflect producer and packer needs. We are working to

understand both consumers' and producers' needs and desires. We attempt to accommodate both points of view in a balanced way. Under Assistant Secretary Foreman's leadership, we are attempting to operate FSQS so that consumer interests are served while at the same time we conduct our industry service and regulatory responsibilities.

Q. The United States imports nearly 1800 million pounds of meat a year. Because of distance, virtually all of this meat is frozen when it gets here. What's to prevent someone from thawing out imported meat, combining it with fresh domestic meat, and selling it in retail stores?

A. Once we determine that imported meat is wholesome, safe, unadulterated, and not misbranded, the owner of that meat is free to mix it with domestic meat, or not to mix it with domestic meat. He can identify it as imported meat, or not identify it as imported meat. There are no federal laws that restrict movement of that product once we determine that it meets the requirements of the Meat Inspection Acts and regulations. As for thawing and refreezing meat, this practice does not cause the harm many people think it causes. When meat is frozen, ice crystals form which rupture the cells in meat. This rupturing tenderizes the meat. Freezing and thawing meat does not materially affect the nutritional quality; what is lost is water and blood. The real problem with thawing and refreezing meat is that each time it is done some microbial growth will occur. Frozen meat that is thawed and held at room temperature will support rapid microbial growth, and this practice should be avoided. Once thawed, meat should be immediately cooked or refrigerated.

Q. Why is there concern over labeling imported meat?

A. Apparently people are concerned that meat coming from other countries is not as safe as meat



Consumer confusion over food grades and what they mean may be eliminated if uniform set of grades is developed. FSQS is studying possibility of providing grades that have some common meaning. Shown here are grading symbols developed primarily for trade between wholesale buyers and sellers.



produced in our country. I understand that concern, but it is not well founded. In order for any foreign producer to export meat to this country, his plant must first be approved by FSQS and it must adhere to rigid standards. Our inspectors overseas review all foreign plant operations and ensure that the practices of both the country and the plant itself are comparable to ours. Any meat shipped from these plants to the United States is inspected at the point of production and is sampled again by FSQS after it arrives here to make sure it still meets our requirements. Meat not complying with our requirements is not cleared by Customs. Some consumers are also concerned that buying imported meat is detrimental to domestic producers. Many consumers want the option of know-

ing that meat is imported and they can then decide as individuals whether they should buy it. I should point out that the efforts we are making to control chemical residues in domestic meat also apply to imported meat. We are developing data on meat exporting countries regarding their agricultural practices and the kinds of drugs and pesticides they use so we can continuously determine that the meat we import is being monitored and tested for the residues that may be expected in meat from those countries.

Q. Is most imported meat used by fast food franchises?

A. Much imported meat goes into ground beef. By regulation, ground beef cannot exceed 30 percent fat. To meet that requirement, processors need to mix lean beef with the trimmings from carcasses. This requires the use of essentially grass-fed cattle. And where does most grass-fed cattle come from? It comes from overseas. Most national fast food chains make hamburger with less than 30 percent fat. The fat content of such hamburger ranges from 18 to 25 percent. Most domestically produced grain-fed beef is too fat to be used alone in ground beef because the 30 percent limit would be exceeded.

Q. How many people is FSQS planning to hire to implement the new Quality Assurance Program?

A. One hundred fifty. They will be trained in proper meat and commodity grading and acceptance techniques. Their role will be to help implement the government-wide Quality Assurance Program assigned to FSQS by the Office of Management and Budget. The program requires FSQS to establish a uniform food purchase specification system. It also requires the agency to perform acceptance checks on all federally purchased food to ensure the government receives the quantity and quality of food specified in contracts. The specifications system would identify the quality characteristics of the food the

government purchases. The acceptance work will assure that the quality called for in the contract was actually provided. Consolidating these activities, OMB felt, would reduce the incidence of bribery and corruption, reduce duplication among federal agencies, and provide a more uniformly applied and less costly service.

Q. What is FSQS doing to provide consumer information?

A. At the moment, we're not doing a very adequate job. FSQS, for example, is not involved in educating consumers about the nutritional content of food. We are hopeful that the Department will develop a broad based nutrition education program through: implementation of its national food and nutrition policy, the development of the Human Nutrition Institute, and the redirection of research and education within the Department. FSQS will provide input to these activities, but is not the principal developer of these programs. We do, however, attempt to keep consumers informed about our actions and we routinely send out notices and copies of our regulatory proposals to a listing of 1800 consumer representatives and individuals as a means of getting consumer input to the decision and policy-making process.

Q. How do USDA employees compare to other employees you have worked with?

A. I think they compare very well. Over the past 23 years I've worked for five different federal agencies. My observation, generally, is that there are talented, dedicated, hard-working people in government service. I have found quality and dedication in all the agencies in which I worked.

Q. What additional safeguards are needed in the meat and poultry industry to protect consumers?

A. We need to more vigorously pursue the chemical residue

problem in meats. We need to vigorously pursue microbial quality of meat foods. We also need to re-evaluate and update our meat food standards, particularly in relationship to permitted water percentages and fat concentration. There's a lot of concern in this country about the fat level in the American diet, and how much fat is in specific foods. We need to improve our labeling requirements and systems so that information consumers need is presented in a less confusing way and so that industry gets better guidance as to what can or cannot



be approved. We need to look more closely at the actual inspection procedures we're using in meat plants relative to animal diseases. Finally, we need to introduce throughout the meat processing industry quality assurance procedures to better assure the American public of wholesome and safe products.

Q. With all of the controversy about meat in the diet, what is your favorite meat?

A. I'm a meat eater, no question about it! I find the controversy about eating meat fascinating, because most Americans would eat meat three times a day—if they could afford it. My preferences in meat in descending order are: veal, lamb, pork, beef, turkey, and chicken. □

Employee Safety Is High Priority

Concerned over the high costs of accidents in USDA and determined to give employees better protection, Secretary Bergland has established a new Office of Safety and Health Management.

The office will be responsible for providing safe and healthful working conditions to all employees. It will be charged with correcting environmental health and safety problems in employee working areas and emphasizing health and safety in all USDA activities. The head of the office will report directly to Assistant Secretary Wallace.

In establishing the new office, Secretary Bergland said that USDA is giving health and safety high priority. "This new office will be a viable force in protecting the health and safety of all our employees, and in reducing the high costs resulting from accidents, injuries, and illnesses," the Secretary said.

Secretary Bergland noted that 37 employees were killed, and nearly 2,400 others disabled, last year while performing their jobs with USDA. He also noted that USDA losses last year from injury compensation, property damage, and negligence claims increased to over \$14 million. The figure does not include additional losses that resulted from motor vehicle accidents.

Most of the accidental deaths last year in USDA occurred from grain elevator explosions, forest fires, drowning, and similar disasters.

Transferred to the new office are the functions previously performed by the Department's safety and health manager, medical officer, and health unit in the Office of Personnel.

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Milton Sloane, Editor
Sharon Edwards, Editorial Assistant

U.S. Energy Problems Produce USDA Office

To help cope with agriculture's energy problems, Secretary Bergland has established a new Office of Energy to coordinate policies. The new office will be a focal point for all energy-related matters including the responsibility for allocating scarce energy resources.

The office will also be responsible for:

- developing energy policies and strategies
- advising the Secretary on energy policies and programs
- evaluating USDA energy programs and progress
- coordinating programs to meet energy-related goals
- representing the Department at energy conferences and meetings
- working with USDA's Office of Governmental and Public Affairs to maintain congressional and public contacts on energy-related matters.



Dr. Weldon V. Barton, director of the new Office of Energy and staff assistant to Secretary Bergland.

The office will also serve as liaison with the Department of Energy and

other government agencies. **Dr. Weldon V. Barton** will head the new office and also continue his duties as assistant to Secretary Bergland.

Through the new office, Secretary Bergland said, USDA will participate more actively in programs leading to the development of a national energy policy. That policy, the Secretary added, will have significant implications for agriculture and rural America, "since nearly a quarter of the country's total energy use goes into the production, processing, marketing, and consumption of food, fiber, and forest products.

"The use, conservation, and development of new sources of energy by Agriculture will be an important part of the policy," the Secretary explained.

Dr. Barton, 39, joined USDA in 1977 after working for a year on the House Agriculture Committee staff. From 1970 to 1975 he was a staff member and representative on energy issues of the National Farmers Union. □

USDA Hires Six Million Dollar Brain

USDA has taken a giant step toward improving its payroll and accounting system. It has bought a \$6 million computer to be installed at the National Finance Center in New Orleans.

The new computer will enable USDA personnel offices to get more information faster, and speed up the processing of personnel records. Scheduled to be installed in July, the sophisticated computer will gradually be phased into operation to replace five other computers currently operating at the center.

Initially, the computer will keep a running account of all money spent by agencies within USDA for equip-

ment, travel, rent, utilities, and other expenses. Eventually, the computer will handle payroll and personnel expenses and process over 160,000 paychecks biweekly. The computer will also process records on employee positions, showing how many positions are filled and the number and type of positions vacant.

William E. Moore, chief of computer operations in New Orleans, said the new computer will be able to handle more work in less time, and use only half the energy of the five existing computers. It will also reduce the number of employees needed to work with the machine by 50 percent.

Assistant Secretary **Joan S. Wallace**

said the new system will save USDA \$4.5 million in reduced computer costs over a six-year period. She also said the new computer was purchased under competitive bidding at a cost one-fourth that of the General Service Administration's schedule price.

The computer in New Orleans is the second of four USDA plans to buy this year under outside contract. The other new systems are to be installed at Kansas City, Mo.; Fort Collins, Colo.; and Washington, D.C. Although available to all USDA agencies, the computer in Fort Collins will be used primarily by the Forest Service, while the Kansas City computer will be used mainly by the Farmers Home Administration and the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service. □

Honor Student Develops Habit

Of Receiving Awards

Eighteen-year-old **Denise Lyles** can do no wrong, it seems.

Just as she was getting over receiving one award, up popped another. . .and another. . .and another. The awards were from the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, a professional women's club, and the local chapter of Disabled American Veterans.

The awards were for Lyles' scholastic achievement in winning second place in the 30th Annual National Ability Counts Contest. Lyles won second prize for an essay entitled "Awakening of the New Minorities." The essay explains the various activities of organizations helping the handicapped.

A part-time clerk/typist for the Food and Nutrition Service, Lyles is partially handicapped with a knee impairment that prevents her from running or jogging. When she is not working for FNS, Lyles is an honor student at a Washington, D.C., high school



Lyles proudly displays award from Woodward Foundation for maintaining high grades and making honor roll. Lyles works for FNS under the stay-in-school program.

who is developing a habit of winning awards.

She has won a math pin, an English pin, a science award, an art contest, and several other high school honors. She has also won an award from the Woodward Foundation that, along with her job with FNS, will enable her to finish school. That was the award she was glowing over when the other three honors arrived. The award from the foundation, inaugurated in Washington in 1960, carries a small stipend and was presented to Lyles for making the honor roll.

Bonnie Whyte, deputy director of FNS' Information Division, said that Lyles "is the backbone of our secretarial staff, and aids in any way she can. She really does a great job, and we're happy to have her."

Lyles herself is very happy being with the agency and feels that the experience she is getting will definitely help her in the future.

Write On!

Everyone writes. Everyone can write better. Good writing requires clear thinking, knowledge of the subject, and hard work. The results are worth it.

In writing good letters, the Civil Service Commission offers several tips.

A good letter, says CSC, is pleasant and friendly. It sounds as if it was written by one human to another. Except for very formal occasions, letters should achieve a conversational tone.

In letter writing, you should avoid using legalese or the language of regulations. Master the subject matter so that you can explain it in your own words.

Beware of gobbledegook. Use familiar words. Technical words and phrases should be saved for a technical audience. If there are no substitutes, use technical words and then define them.

Make your sentences and paragraphs short; but don't overdo it. Too many simple sentences in a row create a choppy effect, so vary your sentence structure.

Use the active voice instead of the passive. "We received your letter" is superior to "Your letter was received." Reading a series of passive constructions is like driving to the grocery store in reverse gear—you get there eventually but it takes unnecessary time and effort.

Get to the point. There is no need for a long windup or for referring at length to a letter you are answering. A private citizen doesn't write so many letters to your agency that he doesn't remember what he asked.

Be complete. Your letter should cover everything pertinent to an inquiry.

It Began With A Balloon

Stan Myslinski has started something.

While on duty in the Allegheny National Forest (Warren, Pa.), Myslinski, a forestry technician, spotted a balloon in a cherry tree. Attached to the balloon was a note from 10-year-old **Lori Gennaccaro** in Kenosha, Wis. The note asked the finder to be her pen pal.

Myslinski took the balloon home to his daughter **Carol**, 8. The two girls have since struck up a written friendship and plan to visit each other soon.

PEOPLE

Arnold Schulz, wildlife biologist for the Forest Service in Elkins, W. Va., has been named U.S. Forester of the Year for 1977. The award was presented by the West Virginia Wildlife Federation for Schulz' work in developing the first wildlife protection plan for the Monongahela National Forest.

Men Making History

Gilbert Davies, Jim Rock, Lee Morford, and Russ Bower are history-makers. They are members of a committee on the Klamath National Forest whose goal is to preserve the past while building for the future.

In the short time they have been together, the men have collected, identified, and preserved a large store of photographs, memorabilia, and literature relating to the history of the California forest. With the materials, the committee members plan to establish a museum and publish a photographic history of the 1.5-million-acre woodland. The museum is expected to be run by a full-time librarian and curator and will be open to the public for research. Already on display on the forest are some of the many photographs the committee has collected. The photographs have been enlarged and hung in the hallways of the forest supervisor's office.

Davies, who has a degree in history from Willamette University (Salem, Oreg.), is committee chairman and contracting officer on the Klamath. Rock is the Klamath's archaeologist, and Morford and Bower are retirees.

As project leader, Davies has begun an oral history program of interviewing folks who knew the Klamath "way back when." So far he has interviewed 75 people and transcribed and edited hundreds of hours of tape.

Assisting him with the interviewing is committee member Morford, who is one of the few people with an intimate knowledge of the vast forest. Morford began his Forest Service career in 1924 as a fire guard on the Klamath and served on four of the forest's six ranger districts. Retired since 1970, Morford has spent hours seeking out and interviewing old-timers for the project.

Among the people they have interviewed are school teachers, ranchers, business people, miners, landowners, timber operators, and members of the Karok Indian tribe. All have provided quantities of information. The oldest person inter-

Project leader Gil Davies (center) looks at 1928 map of Klamath National Forest with Lee Morford (left) and Russ Bower. Group is probing history of the northern California forest to establish museum and develop photographic narrative.



viewed was 101-year-old **Lydia Head**, whose brother—**Robert Finley**—was one of the first forest rangers on the Salmon River District of the Klamath early in this century.

In addition to conducting interviews, Morford is writing a detailed history of all the Klamath's lookout and guard stations—both past and present.

Bower is also a valuable contributor to the project, compiling information dealing with administrative decisions and policies as they relate to land use management. Retired since 1969, Bower was a district ranger on the Klamath from 1936 to 1939, and a forest supervisor from 1950 to 1958.

Rock's role on the committee is to advise his fellow members on the historical project from an archaeological point of view.

As a result of the committee's efforts, an elderly Siskiyou County resident has given the committee over 100 old photographs that show the characteristics and landscape of the Klamath at the turn of the century. The committee hopes to have the photographs restored.

At the end of the project, Davies plans to publish one book on the interviews, and two others on the history of the forest and on the history of the area surrounding the forest.

Farmers Home Is On The Move

Rising demand for services from the Farmers Home Administration has prompted FmHA to establish new state offices in Alaska and in Hawaii. The offices will be located in Palmer, Alaska, and in Hilo, Hawaii, and are expected to open in June.

Establishment of the offices will improve FmHA services to the two states by shifting offices previously administered by FmHA in Oregon (for Alaska) and in California (for Hawaii).

Secretary Bergland said establishment of the offices specifically in Palmer and Hilo was based on Department policy to locate offices in places convenient to rural people and outside large urban centers. He added that "FmHA anticipates greater demands for its programs and services and is gearing up now to respond to them."

FmHA services have been available for years in Alaska and Hawaii, but future demands are expected to intensify as a result of shifts in land ownership—particularly in Alaska—and the agency's expanded role in rural area development.

Agency services during fiscal 1977 totaled more than \$41 million to Alaska and over \$24 million to Hawaii. A major portion of the service went for housing loans to low- and moderate-income families in rural areas.

The Roadside Stand: Something Old, Something New

Remember the good old days when part of the charm of a country drive included a stop at a roadside stand? Well, those days may return.

USDA has approved 16 grants to states to encourage sales of agricultural products—from farmers directly to consumers—under the Direct Marketing Act of 1976. Since March 1978, the Agricultural Marketing Service and the Science and Education Administration have given \$1.5 million in grants to 17 States and Puerto Rico. All told, AMS and SEA have granted nearly \$2 million since 1976.

This year's grants range from \$24,978 to \$219,186 and have been made to Alabama, Alaska, Colorado, Delaware, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Washington, Wyoming, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

Under the grants, a variety of projects is underway. For example,



Roadside stands, common along rural routes years ago, are making a comeback through USDA grants. The grants are to encourage sales of produce from farmers directly to consumers.

New Jersey is using its grant to promote farms where city people can pick fresh produce and pay by the size of the container, and even picnic while they enjoy the country air. Colorado is using its grain to assist in developing open-air markets. Pennsylvania will establish a direct marketing center in a larger metropolitan area, while Missouri

will work with small farm families on a general direct marketing program in selected counties.

Florida is developing a produce market on wheels to serve heavily-populated areas of the state. Georgia and South Carolina have teamed up to establish farmers' markets in Savannah, Ga., and Charleston, S.C., to bring small farmers and low-income consumers together at inner-city markets.

AMS Administrator **Barbara L. Schlei** said that direct marketing is important to a large number of small farmers, although the volume of farm products marketed by the direct method is a small proportion of total U.S. production. For the consumer, Schlei said, direct marketing can be a way for people to buy fresher, locally-grown foods at reasonable prices and, at the same time, see what farming is all about.

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| \$ 6.25 | \$ 25 Bond | 3 | \$1.25 | \$ 50 Bond | 5 |
| \$ 3.75 | \$ 50 Bond | 10 | \$2.50 | \$ 50 Bond | 6 |
| \$ 6.25 | \$ 50 Bond | 6 | \$1.25 | \$ 50 Bond | 5 |
| \$ 7.50 | \$ 50 Bond | 5 | \$3.75 | \$ 75 Bond | 5 |
| \$11.25 | \$ 75 Bond | 5 | \$1.25 | \$100 Bond | 6 |
| \$ 5.00 | \$100 Bond | 15 | \$1.25 | \$100 Bond | 12 |
| \$ 7.50 | \$100 Bond | 10 | \$1.88 | \$100 Bond | 8 |
| \$ 9.38 | \$100 Bond | 8 | \$3.12 | \$100 Bond | 6 |
| \$12.50 | \$100 Bond | 6 | \$2.50 | \$100 Bond | 5 |
| \$15.00 | \$100 Bond | 5 | \$3.75 | \$100 Bond | 4 |
| \$18.75 | \$100 Bond | 4 | \$6.25 | \$100 Bond | 3 |

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Milton Sloane, Editor
Sharon Edwards, Editorial Assistant

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Civil Service Reform and What It Can Mean to You

"Nearly a century has passed since enactment of the first Civil Service Act in 1883. That Act established the United States Civil Service Commission and the merit system it administers. These institutions have served our Nation well in fostering development of a federal workforce which is basically honest, competent, and dedicated to the public interest.

"But the system has serious defects. It has become a bureaucratic maze which neglects merit, tolerates poor performance, permits abuse of legitimate employee rights, and mires every personnel action in red tape, delay, and confusion.

"Civil service reform will be the centerpiece of government reorganization during my term in office."

With that, President Carter submitted to Congress two sweeping proposals: a reorganization plan and a program to reform the civil service system. The proposals affect every USDA employee along with all other workers in the federal service.

In order to inform employees as fully as possible, "USDA" is devoting this entire issue to the basic concepts of the proposals. If approved by Congress, the proposals would have a major impact on personnel policies.

The President's reorganization plan calls for abolishing the Civil Service Commission, and replacing it with a new "watchdog" agency, the Merit Systems Protection Board. It also would establish a separate Office of Personnel Management.

The reform program, on the other hand, calls for simplifying the process—based on performance—for hiring, firing, rewarding, and

disciplining employees; strengthening protection of employee rights; providing protection for "whistleblowers;" and establishing a new pay system for mid-level managers. Additionally, it proposes to limit veterans preference benefits, enhance labor-management relations, and create a Senior Executive Service.

Under the reorganization plan, the Merit Systems Protection Board would consist of three members, with no more than two from the same political party. They would be appointed by the President, confirmed by the Senate, and serve seven-year, non-renewable terms. The Board would hear and decide complaints and appeals (by applicants as well as employees) except those involving examination ratings, job classifications and grades, and insurance claims. Those cases would be referred to the proposed Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

OPM, meanwhile, would be the primary agent for helping the President carry out responsibilities for managing the federal workforce. OPM would develop personnel policies and provide leadership to agencies in carrying them out. It would also examine applicants, conduct investigations, offer training programs, administer the retirement and insurance programs, and provide guidance in the areas of affirmative action and employee utilization. Both the director and deputy director of OPM would serve at the pleasure of the President.

The reorganization plan also proposes forming a Federal Labor Relations Authority which would be an independent bipartisan agency in the Executive Branch. It would consist of a chairman and two full-time members, appointed by the President, to serve for staggered four-year terms.

(Continued on next page)

FLRA would assume the labor relations functions scattered among three agencies (the Department of Labor, Civil Service Commission, and the Federal Labor Relations Council) and would administer the government's labor-management disputes. The agency would have a general counsel who would investigate alleged unfair labor practices and prosecute complaints before the authority.

Under the reorganization plan, the Merit Systems Protection Board would be given a special counsel to investigate charges of reprisals against employees for disclosing information concerning violations of law ("whistleblowing"). The special counsel would have the power to bring charges against individuals engaged in prohibited personnel practices and unlawful political activities.

If approved by Congress, the proposals could mean that for the first time employees who blow the whistle would be protected.

The President's second proposal—to reform the civil service system—is divided into seven titles. Six deal with substantive issues and the seventh with administrative matters. The six are: Title I, Merit Principles; Title II, Civil Service Functions, Performance Appraisals, Adverse Actions; Title III, Staffing; Title IV, Senior Executive Service; Title V, Merit Pay; and Title VI, Research and Demonstration Authority.

Title I, Merit Principles

Title I establishes eight principles to govern the federal workforce, and provides authority for disciplining violators. It also defines "prohibited personnel practices."

The eight basic principles, which would underlie all personnel practices and actions, would require agencies to:

1. recruit from all segments of society, and select and promote on the basis of ability, knowledge, and skills, under fair and open competition.

2. provide fair and equal treatment in all matters, without regard to

politics, race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, age, or handicap, and with proper regard for individual privacy and constitutional rights.

3. provide equal pay for equal work, with incentives and recognition for excellent performance.

4. promote high standards of integrity, conduct, and concern for the public interest.

5. make efficient and effective use of the workforce.

6. retain employees who perform well, correct the performance of those whose work is inadequate, and separate those who cannot or will not meet required standards.

7. improve performance through effective education and training.

8. protect employees from arbitrary action, personal favoritism, or political coercion.

The President's proposal holds agency heads and their designated officials responsible for carrying out all personnel laws, rules, and regulations, and for insuring that violations of prohibited practices do not occur. Prohibited practices include unlawful discrimination, considerations other than merit factors, use of an office for political purposes, deception or obstruction in personnel matters, use of undue influence, preferential treatment, nepotism, and retaliation.

Title II, Civil Service

Functions, Performance

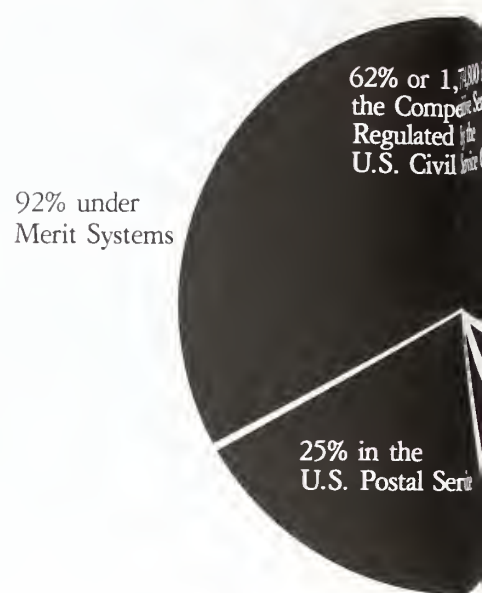
Appraisals, Adverse Actions

Title II of the President's proposal would place into law new guidelines for rating employees' performance, handling disciplinary and adverse actions, and managing employee appeals.

It would also permit the Office of Personnel Management to delegate personnel functions to federal agencies, including the right to conduct competitive examinations. This is designed to alleviate the long delays experienced in hiring employees through the Civil Service Commission.

Title II goes beyond the President's reorganization plan—which creates

Coverage of Federal Employees Under Merit Systems



the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB)—to increase the Board's independence, as well as that of its special counsel.

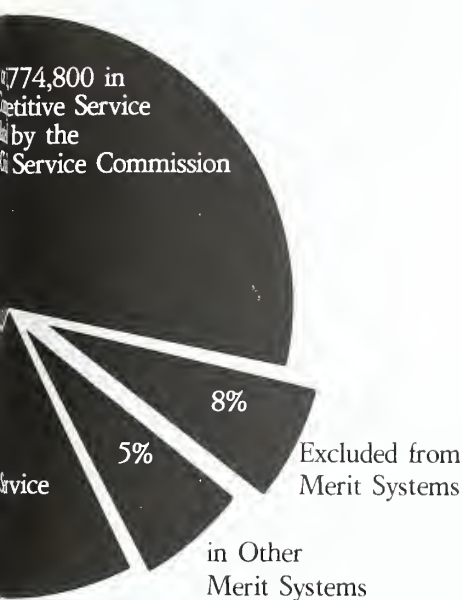
The Board would have the power to subpoena witnesses and evidence it needs to conduct investigations and to decide appeals. The special counsel would have authority to investigate complaints concerning prohibited personnel practices and to initiate disciplinary action against employees who engage in such practices.

As circumstances warrant, the Board could discipline non-Presidential appointees by requiring dismissal, demotion, suspension, a fine of up to \$1,000, or by issuing a reprimand or barring the individual from federal employment for up to five years.

The counsel could also stop reassignments to other geographical areas or halt other actions which could be construed as reprisals while an investigation is pending.

Under the proposed appeal procedures, employees would no longer be able to appeal a suspension of 30 days or less, or an action resulting in a pay reduction, unless the reduction exceeds one step of the

General Employees Systems (Worldwide)



employee's grade or three percent of basic pay. RIF's, or reductions-in-force, would no longer be considered disciplinary, and agencies could remove or suspend employees for more than 30 days if such action would promote government efficiency.

Title II eliminates the present employee performance appraisal system which requires adjective ratings of "outstanding," "satisfactory," and "unsatisfactory." Agencies would be required to develop one or more rating systems to encourage quality performance and enhance productivity. The ratings would be used as a basis for developing, rewarding, assigning, demoting, promoting, retaining, or firing employees (for other than misconduct).

Any employee recommended for demotion or dismissal because of unacceptable performance would be entitled to—

- a written notice, at least 30 days before the proposed action, which must specify the unacceptable performance and the level of acceptance.
- an opportunity during the notice

period to demonstrate acceptable performance.

- the right to be represented by counsel.
- an opportunity to reply orally and in writing.
- a written decision, reflecting the concurrence of an official higher than the one who proposed the action, that the employee has not demonstrated acceptable performance.

An employee fired or demoted for poor performance could appeal the decision to the MSPB. The decision would be sustained, however, by the Board unless the employee showed proof that there was a procedural error that violated his or her rights, the decision was not supported by substantial evidence, or there was discrimination.

If no action is taken during the warning period, and if an employee's performance continues to be satisfactory for one year following the warning, the record of unacceptable performance would be removed from the employee's file.

Employees wishing to challenge Board decisions would generally file their claims with the U.S. Court of Appeals or in matters involving pay, with the Court of Claims.

Title III, Staffing

Title III gives agencies greater flexibility in selecting qualified candidates for federal employment. The existing requirement limiting selection to the top three candidates on a civil service register would be expanded to permit selection from among the top seven. Also, the rule prohibiting employment of more than two members of the same household in government would be repealed.

Title III proposes to end lifetime preference for non-disabled veterans after September 30, 1980, and to limit veterans preference for hiring to 10 years following separation from military service. It also proposes that military personnel retiring at or above the rank of major or lieutenant

commander would receive no preference in hiring. For retired military personnel below that rank, the time limit would be set at three years after leaving military service.

Disabled veterans would continue to retain preference in hiring without any time limits.

Non-disabled veterans would continue to receive preference over other employees during a reduction-in-force for three years following their initial appointment. After that, they would receive an additional five years of credit when computing their length of service, regardless of their length of military service.

Title III also proposes a new benefit for disabled veterans that would permit their noncompetitive appointment to positions if they have service-connected disabilities of 50 percent or more.

To reduce the effects of a reduction-in-force, the proposal would permit employees to retire if their agency were engaged in a major reorganization, reduction-in-force, or transfer of function. Agencies would be authorized to train employees who would otherwise be separated by a RIF for placement in other agencies.

Under the proposal, new supervisors or managers who do not succeed, or who do not wish to remain in that capacity, could be returned without disciplinary action to a position of no lower grade or pay than the previous one they held.

Title IV, Senior Executive Service

Title IV would create a Senior Executive Service of about 10,000 career and noncareer executives, GS-16 and above. SES would be comprised of managers who direct an organizational unit and who are held accountable for the success of programs. No more than 10 percent could be noncareer executives.

The purpose of the service is to:

- provide flexibility in assigning executives.

FLRA would assume the labor relations functions scattered among three agencies (the Department of Labor, Civil Service Commission, and the Federal Labor Relations Council) and would administer the government's labor-management disputes. The agency would have a general counsel who would investigate alleged unfair labor practices and prosecute complaints before the authority.

Under the reorganization plan, the Merit Systems Protection Board would be given a special counsel to investigate charges of reprisals against employees for disclosing information concerning violations of law ("whistleblowing"). The special counsel would have the power to bring charges against individuals engaged in prohibited personnel practices and unlawful political activities.

If approved by Congress, the proposals could mean that for the first time employees who blow the whistle would be protected.

The President's second proposal—to reform the civil service system—is divided into seven titles. Six deal with substantive issues and the seventh with administrative matters. The six are: Title I, Merit Principles; Title II, Civil Service Functions, Performance Appraisals, Adverse Actions; Title III, Staffing; Title IV, Senior Executive Service; Title V, Merit Pay; and Title VI, Research and Demonstration Authority.

Title I, Merit Principles

Title I establishes eight principles to govern the federal workforce, and provides authority for disciplining violators. It also defines "prohibited personnel practices."

The eight basic principles, which would underlie all personnel practices and actions, would require agencies to:

1. recruit from all segments of society, and select and promote on the basis of ability, knowledge, and skills, under fair and open competition.
2. provide fair and equal treatment in all matters, without regard to

politics, race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, age, or handicap, and with proper regard for individual privacy and constitutional rights.

3. provide equal pay for equal work, with incentives and recognition for excellent performance.
4. promote high standards of integrity, conduct, and concern for the public interest.
5. make efficient and effective use of the workforce.
6. retain employees who perform well, correct the performance of those whose work is inadequate, and separate those who cannot or will not meet required standards.
7. improve performance through effective education and training.
8. protect employees from arbitrary action, personal favoritism, or political coercion.

The President's proposal holds agency heads and their designated officials responsible for carrying out all personnel laws, rules, and regulations, and for insuring that violations of prohibited practices do not occur. Prohibited practices include unlawful discrimination, considerations other than merit factors, use of an office for political purposes, deception or obstruction in personnel matters, use of undue influence, preferential treatment, nepotism, and retaliation.

Title II, Civil Service

Functions, Performance

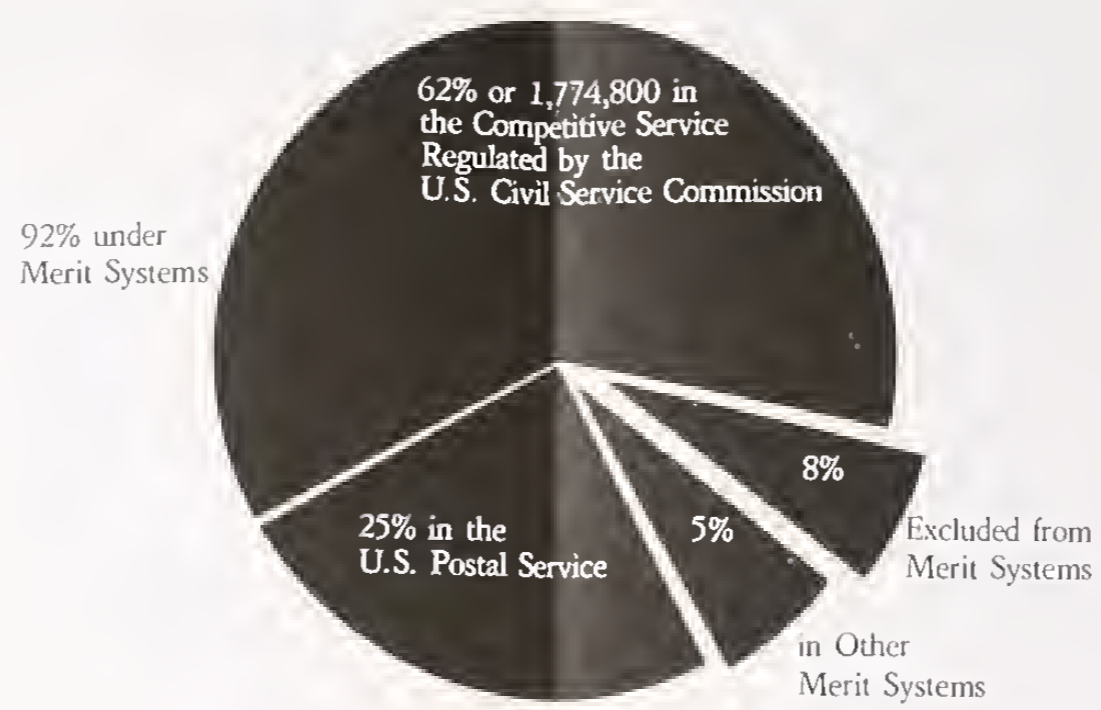
Appraisals, Adverse Actions

Title II of the President's proposal would place into law new guidelines for rating employees' performance, handling disciplinary and adverse actions, and managing employee appeals.

It would also permit the Office of Personnel Management to delegate personnel functions to federal agencies, including the right to conduct competitive examinations. This is designed to alleviate the long delays experienced in hiring employees through the Civil Service Commission.

Title II goes beyond the President's reorganization plan—which creates

Coverage of Federal Employees Under Merit Systems (Worldwide)



the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB)—to increase the Board's independence, as well as that of its special counsel.

The Board would have the power to subpoena witnesses and evidence it needs to conduct investigations and to decide appeals. The special counsel would have authority to investigate complaints concerning prohibited personnel practices and to initiate disciplinary action against employees who engage in such practices.

As circumstances warrant, the Board could discipline non-Presidential appointees by requiring dismissal, demotion, suspension, a fine of up to \$1,000, or by issuing a reprimand or barring the individual from federal employment for up to five years.

The counsel could also stop reassignments to other geographical areas or halt other actions which could be construed as reprisals while an investigation is pending.

Under the proposed appeal procedures, employees would no longer be able to appeal a suspension of 30 days or less, or an action resulting in a pay reduction, unless the reduction exceeds one step of the

employee's grade or three percent of basic pay. RIF's, or reductions-in-force, would no longer be considered disciplinary, and agencies could remove or suspend employees for more than 30 days if such action would promote government efficiency.

Title II eliminates the present employee performance appraisal system which requires adjective ratings of "outstanding," "satisfactory," and "unsatisfactory." Agencies would be required to develop one or more rating systems to encourage quality performance and enhance productivity. The ratings would be used as a basis for developing, rewarding, assigning, demoting, promoting, retaining, or firing employees (for other than misconduct).

Any employee recommended for demotion or dismissal because of unacceptable performance would be entitled to—

- a written notice, at least 30 days before the proposed action, which must specify the unacceptable performance and the level of acceptance.
- an opportunity during the notice

period to demonstrate acceptable performance.

—the right to be represented by counsel.

—an opportunity to reply orally and in writing.

—a written decision, reflecting the concurrence of an official higher than the one who proposed the action, that the employee has not demonstrated acceptable performance.

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The purpose of the service is to:

- provide flexibility in assigning executives.

- encourage mobility of senior executives among agencies.
- reward high performance of career executives with additional compensation in the form of annual bonuses.
- make it possible to easily remove managers whose performance is marginal or unsatisfactory.
- provide opportunities for career executives to serve in higher level positions, including Presidential posts, without losing their career status.

Total salary for the senior executives would include base pay, plus performance awards, and incentive stipends. Unusually competent executives could be nominated for the rank of "Meritorious Executive," which would carry a five-year stipend of \$2,500 a year, and "Distinguished Executive," which would carry a stipend of \$5,000 a year for five years.

Title V, Merit Pay

Title V of the reform program would require that salaries of supervisors and managers in grades GS-13 through GS-15 be based on performance rather than length of service.

It would abolish the existing pay steps within those three grades and allow employees to receive cash awards for successful performance.

Title VI, Research and Demonstration Authority

Title VI gives broad authority to the Office of Personnel Management to support research directly related to improving management, and to experiment with new management concepts. OPM could, for example, permit an agency to test the practicality of working a four-day week of ten hours a day.

Projects could not involve more than 5,000 employees or last for more than five years. They also could not include variations to laws and regulations governing base pay, leave benefits, insurance, and annuities.

Q. Why should the Civil Service Commission be split into two organizations?

A. The Civil Service Commission, created in 1883 to guard against hiring abuses, has been assigned over the years numerous and sometimes conflicting responsibilities by the Congress and the President. The Commission today is required to serve simultaneously as (1) a policymaking staff agency assisting other agencies in their personnel operations, and (2) a neutral third-party adjudicatory body and protector against merit systems abuses in agencies. Although the Commission has attempted to carry out these dual roles, the inherent conflicts in them have hampered its effectiveness and eroded its credibility with management, employees, and the public.

Q. Why is it necessary to simplify the process for hiring, rewarding, and disciplining federal employees?

A. The present system, originally built to protect against the "spoils system" of political appointments, has now become so encrusted with excessive regulations that it is, in many instances, a major obstacle to government productivity and a shield for mediocrity. Existing rules on hiring are so rigid that it can take up to a year to fill a vacancy, and many managers who are charged with the responsibility of seeing that services are delivered have little or no say over who is hired. Likewise, agencies that wish to dismiss or demote employees with proven records of poor performance face years of appeals and red tape before the separation can be effected. In short, administrators have lost the power to make hiring, promotion, or firing decisions based on performance.

Q. Why do veterans preference laws need to be changed?

A. The veterans preference system, which gives priority treatment to all veterans throughout their federal careers in hiring and lay-off situations, does not take into

account the present condition of the labor market. This condition includes the pressing employment needs of women and minorities, the availability of more sophisticated methods for examining and matching candidates for specific jobs, and the particular needs of the young and disabled veteran. The proposed legislation would assure that maximum employment benefits are provided for the disabled and recently-discharged veteran but would modify the effects of the present system on women and minorities.

Q. How would the Senior Executive Service make it easier for agency heads to manage their executive personnel resources?

A. The complex and time-consuming processes of having the Civil Service Commission set pay levels and approve qualifications each time a job is filled would be repealed. Instead, the Office of Personnel Management would approve the individual's managerial qualifications only once. The agency head could then assign the individual to any senior position and set the appropriate pay level within a pre-established range. Up to 50 percent of senior executives could receive a performance bonus each year. Unsatisfactory or marginal career managers could be removed without appeal, but would have the right to retire if they are eligible or take a lower level job.

If you have any questions regarding the reform proposals, please direct them to your agency personnel office or to Tom Gill, Office of Personnel, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250.

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Milton Sloane, Editor
Sharon Edwards, Editorial Assistant

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Employee Newsletter
of the U.S. Department
of Agriculture

'USDA'

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May 24, 1978

Employees Speak Out On Civil Service Reform



Congresswoman Gladys Spellman listens as Keith Krue of ASCS (right) testifies on civil service reform proposals. Spellman invited USDA employee views on the reform measures in Jefferson Auditorium.

Members of a Congressional committee visited USDA recently to solicit employees' views on proposed civil service reform (USDA, May 10, 1978).

Accompanied by committee staff and counsel, **Congresswoman Gladys Spellman** and **Congressman Herbert Harris** told hundreds of USDA employees they had come to "hear what federal employees have to say about the President's proposal. Federal employees, we feel, are vitally interested in a personnel system that encourages efficiency, effectiveness, and initiative."

Then the Members listened for four hours as one employee after another testified on the merits of the proposal in Jefferson Auditorium. Comments centered mainly on two key aspects of the proposal: the Senior

Executive Service and the Merit Pay System. Most employees testified that they favor some measure of reform, but urged the committee to carefully study the proposal.

Among the employees who testified were **Keith A. Kreul** of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service; **Gene Cunningham**, also of ASCS; **Claude C. Haren** of the Economics, Statistics and Cooperatives Service; **Victor G. Beal, Jr.**, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service; **Clement F. Munno**, Food and Nutrition Service; **Howard Woodworth**, Federal Grain Inspection Service; **Teresa Cunningham**, Office of Equal Opportunity; **Frank Turberville**, Rural Electrification Administration; **George J. Schladt**, Farmers Home Administration; **Ralph Spencer**, Office of General Sales Manager; **Kevin J. Keaney**,

Science and Education Administration; and **Richard G. Ford**, also of SEA and president of OPEDA (Organization of Professional Employees of the Department of Agriculture).

Also testifying at the hearing were representatives of the Civil Service Commission.

After listening to the testimony, Congresswoman Spellman said: "It's very clear that there are problems in the present system. I think as we look at the legislation before us (the reform proposals), we have got to be very concerned about the dangers of making some wrong decisions—the dangers of allowing politics to get even more entrenched into the system. On the other hand, I think we should not miss the opportunity to do a better job than we are doing today."

Guess Who Came to Visit!



(Courtesy of Washington State University)

Vice President Mondale observes as research technician John Pritchett (left) demonstrates wheat breeding technique. Demonstration was conducted during the Vice President's tour of federal research laboratory at Washington State University. Looking on is research leader Dr. Robert Allan.

Agricultural researchers at Washington State University got a pleasant surprise recently when Vice President Walter Mondale stopped by for a visit.

Under the guidance of John Pritchett, research technician for the Science and Education Administration, the Vice President was given a tour of the federal research laboratory at the University, where wheat milling and wheat breeding experiments are conducted. The staff enjoyed a rare opportunity to demonstrate their work to the Vice President, who, during the tour, tried his hand at cross-pollinating wheat. □

PEOPLE

Assistant Secretary Joan S. Wallace has been honored by Bradley University with the Distinguished Alumnus Award for 1978. Dr. Wallace received the award at the annual alumni reunion dinner in Peoria, Ill. Guest speaker at the dinner was Congressman Philip Crane, a former Bradley history professor.

Travelers' Advisory

Employees who travel on government business must have high level approval in order to travel first class.

Regulations amended by the General Services Administration require that first class air travel be approved in advance by an agency head or his or her designee. In USDA, approval may be given only by the Secretary or the Deputy Secretary.

The regulations amend and strengthen existing provisions governing first class air travel, which historically has been restricted. In a memorandum to employees, Secretary Bergland said that first class air travel will be approved only when:

- first class accommodations are necessary because an employee is so handicapped that other accommodations cannot be used.
- first class accommodations are required for security reasons.
- less than first class accommodations on foreign carriers do

not provide adequate sanitation or health standards.

- space is not available in less than first class accommodations in time to enable an individual to conduct urgent government business.

Employees may travel first class and not need Secretarial approval when regularly scheduled flights between the points of origin and destination provide only one class of service, and no competing carrier on the same route offers more economical service.

Travel vouchers for handicapped employees must certify for each trip that first class accommodations are medically necessary. "Impairments which tend to be temporary in nature should be recertified at least twice a year by a physician," Secretary Bergland said. "The President has specifically excluded overweight and extreme height as criteria for first class travel."

The Secretary cautioned that employees traveling first class without proper approval will be billed under

No Extra Paycheck After All

Those of you who read with interest that there'll be 27 paychecks this year (USDA, March 29, 1978) may be unhappy to hear the latest word from the Civil Service Commission.

CSC has revised its earlier statement. There will not be 27 paychecks this year, after all. "So please don't bank on it," the Commission said. "Nor will there be 27 pay periods as previously reported. Most employees, however, will receive 27 paychecks in 1984," the Commission said.

So for 1978, at least, employees will only have to declare 26 paychecks on their income tax returns.

the regulations for the difference between first class air fare and the next lower rate. □

Combating Inflation

Now might not be the best of times to ask the boss for a raise.

In a letter to his Cabinet officers, President Carter instructed them to "take every possible action" to hold down government spending. He also asked them to "analyze your respective agency's operations and recommend specific steps you might take to reinforce efforts to combat inflation."

Responding for Secretary Bergland, **Dr. Howard Hjort**, director of economics and budget for USDA, told the White House that "the Department's 1979 budget includes a number of proposals which will have an anti-inflationary impact if approved by Congress. These include legislation to reduce federal food assistance program subsidies to the non-needy, legislation to increase interest rates on certain USDA credit programs, and proposals to hold the line in fiscal 1979 on USDA funding for controllable programs."

Continuing, Dr. Hjort said: "Congressional pressure to increase funding for rural development loan and grant programs, agricultural research and education, soil and water resources, and forestry programs is intense. We are working closely with the Office of Management and

Budget to minimize these spending increases."

In addition, Dr. Hjort said, USDA is considering a number of other anti-inflation actions such as encouraging direct farmer-to-consumer marketing, developing nutrition education programs to help consumers select the best food buys, submitting legislation to revise meat import laws so that imports automatically increase when lean beef prices rise and decrease when they go down, increasing the sale of U.S. farm products to help diminish the trade deficit, and selecting minimum costs foods under federal food assistance programs which still meet nutritional requirements.

While not mentioning personnel costs specifically, Dr. Hjort added that USDA "will, of course, continue with internal actions which will have a favorable impact on inflation."

RDS Now FmHA; Acting Director Named

The Rural Development Service, once an independent agency under the assistant secretary for rural development, has officially become part of the Farmers Home Administration. The merger results from a reorganization of USDA, an-

nounced last fall by Secretary Bergland.

RDS is now the Rural Development Policy Management and Coordination Staff of FmHA. **William J. Nagle**, formerly administrator of RDS, heads the new policy staff as associate administrator. Nagle has 17 years experience in economic and social programs and nine years experience as a journalist, researcher, and college professor. He taught at Cleveland State, Georgetown, and Howard Universities.

In another organizational development, Assistant Secretary Wallace has designated **John E. Carson** as acting director of the Office of Operations and Finance. Until recently he was deputy administrator for management in the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. Since 1960 Carson has served in USDA in a variety of positions, including personnel specialist, program analyst, budget chief, and management specialist. Carson coordinated the administrative work involved in establishing the Food Safety and Quality Service and the Office of Operations and Finance.



Twice As Rewarding

William C. Feist, a research chemist at USDA's Forest Products Laboratory (Madison, Wis.), has been chosen to receive an American Motors Conservation Award for environmental preservation activities. He is one of only 22 people nationally to receive this year's award, which consists of a bronze medallion and \$500.

Feist was recognized for his more than 10 years of efforts to preserve natural habitats and open space in the Middleton, Wis., area. Equally as rewarding to Feist is the fact that his work helps ensure that future citizens can enjoy hiking trails, parks, ponds, creeks, marshes, and lake-shore in an urban setting.



Volunteer conservationist William C. Feist looks over a marsh and pond preserved as part of his efforts in Middleton, Wis. Feist persuaded the Middleton City Council to adopt a comprehensive park plan and then helped gain federal financing. The City purchased several hundred acres of marsh area and halted the degradation of a major stream.

Retirement at 70 Ends

After September 30, federal employees will no longer have to retire at age 70.

Congress has repealed the law requiring mandatory retirement at 70, thus enabling employees to stay on the job longer. Mandatory retirement, however, will remain in effect for members of special groups, such as air traffic controllers who must retire at age 55, certain law enforcement officers and firefighters who must retire at 56, and certain Alaska Railroad, Panama Canal Company, and Canal Zone Government employees who must retire at 62.

According to the Office of Personnel, Congress' action in abolishing mandatory retirement will initially allow about 500 USDA workers to extend their time on the job.

Congress has also repealed the law which restricts 70-year-olds to temporary jobs to allow those individuals to hold permanent federal positions.

Summer Bugaboos

Weather aside, probably nothing spoils summer fun more than pesky, biting insects. Every year, insects irritate millions of lovers of the great outdoors—out hiking, camping, or picnicking. Although most insect bites and stings cause only temporary discomfort, some can cause serious illness and even death.

To guard against insect bites, it pays to take precautions and to keep a repellent or pesticide handy. It is also a good idea to keep a first aid kit available.

Repellents fall into two general categories: those that may be applied to both skin and clothing, and those that may be applied to clothing only. While repellents are effective in keeping most insects away (flies, mosquitoes, gnats, chiggers, fleas, and ticks), they are not much good against bees and spiders. Pesticides, on the other hand, will kill any type of insect.

Whichever you use, be sure to follow the directions carefully and heed all precautions on the label.

When camping out, take extra precautions to protect against insect bites. Before you pitch a tent, for example, clear the area of dead leaves, twigs, and loose stones. If possible, never camp near rockpiles or fallen trees because spiders and scorpions often hide there. Keep spiders and other insects out of your tent by making sure the floor is tightly fastened to the sides and that all of the windows in the tent are screened. Use a bed net if you are sleeping in the open.

Where ticks are a problem, wear slacks or long trousers and tuck them into the tops of your socks or boots. Practice sanitation. A clean campsite or picnic area is less likely to attract most kinds of insects than a littered area. To keep insects from landing on food, cover open food dishes with a fine-mesh net.

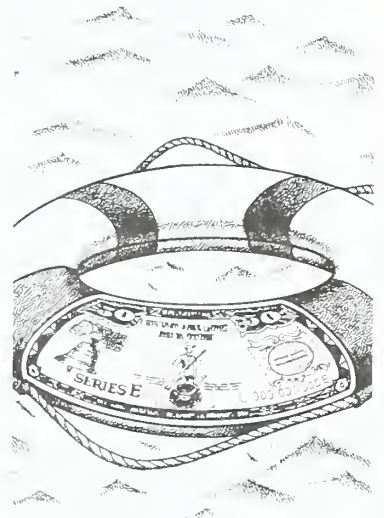
Finally, if you are ever bitten by an insect, bathe and disinfect the area and apply a local anesthetic. Never scratch an area where you've been bitten. If pain from an insect bite persists for more than a few seconds—or if you feel dizzy, nauseated, or feverish after having been bitten—get medical attention as soon as possible.

For more information about insect repellents, you may obtain a single free copy of HG 200, Be Safe from Insects in Recreation Areas, from the Publications Division, Office of Governmental and Public Affairs, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

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Milton Sloane, Editor
Sharon Edwards, Editorial Assistant

Keep Afloat.



Take stock in America.
Buy U.S. Savings Bonds.

Tips on Buying Property

Interested in buying surplus property and learning how you can purchase it? Write for a free copy of Buying Government Surplus Personal Property from the Consumer Information Center, Dept. 628F, Pueblo, Colo. 81009.

Perform a death-defying act.



Exercise regularly.

Give Heart Fund
American Heart Association



Hundreds of friends, relatives, and employees were on hand at the Sylvan Theater to congratulate USDA's 1978 Honor Award winners. Awards were presented to 85 individuals and 18 groups for distinguished and superior service in conducting USDA programs.

Top Award Winners of 1978

"The work you do in this Department affects the health of the nation's economy, our standard of living, and the future of not only our own children, but children all over the world. No other federal agency is more intimately involved in the daily lives and well-being of every American. If there's one group of federal workers held in high esteem, it is the employees of this Department.

"Those of you we honor today, and the thousands like you, not only set a standard for other employees, but also set a standard for the kind of system we need—one that applauds initiative, promotes flexibility, and rewards performance."

Speaking was **Vice President Walter F. Mondale** at the 32nd Annual Honor Awards Ceremony. At the Sylvan Theater at the foot of the Washington Monument grounds, USDA presented Distinguished and Superior Service Awards to 85 employees and 18 groups representing 35 states, the District of Columbia, and the People's Republic of China.

The awards are presented annually to employees who have contributed to increased effectiveness and efficiency of Department programs. All USDA employees are eligible for nomination.

Eight employees received the Distinguished Service Award,

USDA's highest honor, for exceptional program administration and significant contributions in research. Superior Service Awards were given to 77 individuals plus the 18 groups for excellence in skills, leadership, and resourceful management.

Commenting also on this year's award winners, **Secretary Bergland** said: "Today we honor the men and women who help maintain the tradition of service that earned the Department's reputation as 'the people's Department.' This very quality of service is the reason we are so often given the responsibility to lead important national enterprises.

"Most recently the Department was called to take the lead in the effort to improve the nation's level of nutrition. President Carter and the Congress both recognized what the Department's vast resources in research, education, and extension could do for better dietary levels in this country.

"Of course, to eat well, we must produce well. The nation's agricultural resources need to be tended with such care that they yield to future generations the same abundance of food and fiber we presently enjoy.

"It is no coincidence that the Department has the major responsibility for all federal efforts with an impact on rural places. The Department has demonstrated over and over again that it not only understands the problems of the people it serves, but also knows how to deliver the information they want the way they want it.

"The people's Department is alive and well, thanks to the men and women we recognize today, and the spirit they represent."

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARDS



Victor A. Senechal, Assistant Deputy Administrator, State and County Operations, ASCS; Washington, D.C.

For extraordinary contribution to agriculture and to the nation as the principal Departmental architect of the Food and Agriculture Act of 1977, the most comprehensive farm legislation ever enacted by Congress.



David R. Galliard, Deputy Administrator, Program Operations, FGIS; Washington, D.C.

For exceptional initiative and unwavering dedication in directing implementation of the revised U.S. Grain Standards Act and formation of the Federal Grain Inspection Service, to protect integrity in U.S. grain marketing.



Jerry M. Alexander, Recreation and Interpretive Planner, FS; Russellville, Ark.

For excellence in development and implementation of outstanding interpretive programs at Blanchard Springs Caverns; and significant contributions to other resource management programs and interpretive efforts for the public.



Howard T. Dulmage, Supervisory Microbiologist, Cotton Insects Laboratory, SEA; Brownsville, Tex.

For proposing the concept and proving that the activity of a bacterial agent used in the biological control of insects is related to the poisonous substances within the bacteria rather than to the number of spores.



Tommye Cooper, Director, Fort Collins Computer Center, O&F; Fort Collins, Colo.

For effective management and distinctive leadership as Director of the Fort Collins Computer Center during its establishment and subsequent operation.



Leonard Jurd, Research Leader, Natural Products Chemistry Unit, Western Regional Research Center, SEA; Berkeley, Calif.

For distinctive research on the chemistry and biological properties of plant phenols of agricultural significance.



Marvin T. Goff, Director, National Veterinary Services Laboratories, APHIS; Ames, Iowa.

For highly effective direction in the reorganization of National Veterinary Services Laboratories; and for the planning and direction in construction of the new laboratory facility.



Robert J. Byrne, Senior Agricultural Economist—Transportation, ESCS; Washington, D.C.

For providing exceptional leadership, research and assistance to farmer cooperatives and agricultural producers; and for implementing efficient transportation systems in the nation's cooperative sector.

SUPERIOR SERVICE AWARDS

Agricultural Economic Development

John O. Gerald, ESCS; Washington, D.C.

Preston E. LaFerney, ESCS; Washington, D.C.

Thomas W. Little, ESCS; Washington, D.C.

Duane M. Skow, ESCS; Des Moines, Iowa.

Fred C. Thorp, ESCS; Washington, D.C.

Education and Information

Ovid U. Bay, SEA; Washington, D.C.

Elsie J. Carper, SEA; Washington, D.C.

Alan C. Epps, CES; Fairbanks, Alas.

Pamela A. M. Fraser-Walters, FS; Albuquerque, N. Mex.

George M. Hansen, FS; Portland, Oreg.

Arnold F. Hunter, CES; Greenville, Tenn.

Edward H. Merritt, CES; Hartford, Conn.

Maude T. Thevenot, CES; Baton Rouge, La.

Emergency Preparedness

Leon D. Logan, FS; Bozeman, Mont., and **Glenn A. Roloff**, FS; Missoula, Mont.

Blaine D. Stockton, Jr., REA; Washington, D.C.

Environment and Natural Resource Protection

Joseph R. Binder, REA; Washington, D.C.

Bryon A. Breisch, Jr., SCS; Butler, Pa.

Paul R. Britt, SCS; Troy, N.C.

William B. Buffaloe, State Department of Agriculture; Raleigh, N.C.

Melvin T. Dorn, SCS; Russellville, Ark.

Roy G. Freeman, Jr., SCS; Kenedy, Tex.

Joseph W. Gentry, APHIS; Washington, D.C.

Vernon O. Hamre, FS; Ogden, Utah.

Robert M. Mack, APHIS; Austin,

Tex., and **Robert W. Page**, APHIS; Alexandria, Minn.

James M. McGuire, SCS; Bryan, Tex.

Jewell L. Meyer, CES; Parlier, Calif., and **Earl H. Olson**, CES; Modesto, Calif.

John Pierovich, FS; Macon, Ga.

Ruth G. Stimson, CES; Epping, N.H.

Eugene Williams, SCS; McKinney, Tex.

Kenneth H. Wright, SEC; Portland, Oreg.

Equal Employment Opportunity and Civil Rights

Lorraine Kelly, APHIS; Minneapolis, Minn., and **Joseph R. Taylor**, APHIS; Minneapolis, Minn.

William C. Payne, Jr., OEO; Washington, D.C.

Paul N. Weaver, Jr., FS; Albuquerque, N. Mex.



Ruth E. Gault, AMS, Detroit, Mich., receives Superior Service Award from Secretary Bergland "for commendable performance that contributed significantly to maintaining an outstanding fruit and vegetable market news program in Detroit that is a credit to the Department and the nation." At center is Edna Bryant of OIG who assisted the Secretary in presenting the awards.

International Agricultural Affairs

John F. Hudson, FAS; Washington, D.C.

Martin Kriesberg, IDS; Washington, D.C.

Lucille Sargent, FAS; Peking, People's Republic of China.

Gilbert E. Sindelar, FAS; Washington, D.C.

Management Effectiveness and Improvement

Rosella Abrahams, SCS; Clinton, Okla.

Galen S. Bridge, SCS; Spokane, Wash.

Helen E. Craig, FmHA; Washington, D.C.

Tommy Davis, OIG; Washington, D.C.

John Friese, FNS; Burlington, Mass.

Theodore R. Gardner, FSQS; Washington, D.C.

Daniel E. Holmes, SCS; Champaign, Ill.

Andrew P. Hornsby, FNS; Washington, D.C.

Chester E. Jensen, FS; Ogden, Utah.

Ralph M. Magoffin, State Department of Agriculture; Columbia, S.C.

Edna R. O'Quinn, OBP&E, Washington, D.C.

Deborah Ortiz, O&F; Washington, D.C.

Lee A. Paine, FS; Berkeley, Calif.

Vernon D. Pritchard, FS; Bend, Oreg.

Peter R. Shambora, FNS; Washington, D.C.

Nancy M. Smith, FNS; Burlington, Mass.

Gerald W. Van Gilst, FS; Washington, D.C.

Robert C. Zeller, FCIC; Kansas City, Mo.

Marketing and Consumer Services

Ruth E. Gault, AMS; Detroit, Mich.

Doyle C. Golden, State Department of Agriculture; Tallahassee, Fla.

John E. Spaulding, FSQS; Washington, D.C.

Alphonsas P. Stankaitis, FSQS; Hartford, Conn.

Robert A. Zortman, FGIS; Mobile, Ala.

Rural Community Development

Warren J. Brown, SCS; Durango, Colo.

James O. Buchanan, FmHA; Raleigh, N.C.

Maurice L. McLinn, FmHA; Huron, S. Dak.

Helen S. Moirs, FmHA; Presque Isle, Maine.

William A. Ricketts, REA; Washington, D.C.

Forrest W. Southall, FmHA; Grantsville, W. Va.

—Continued next page.

Scientific Research

Ronald Fayer, SEA; Beltsville, Md.
Edwin N. Frankel, SEA; Peoria, Ill.
Karl J. Kanvik, FS; Madison, Wis.
T. Kent Kirk, FS; Madison, Wis.
Waldemar Klassen, SEA; Beltsville, Md.
Shirley F. Lee, SEA; Beltsville, Md.
Chester G. McWhorter, SEA; Stoneville, Miss.



William Brosseau (right) accepts Superior Service Group Achievement Award for Unified Management Information System/Systems Improvement Assistance Project Monitoring Task Team, OIG, Kansas City, Mo. The group was cited "for creative and professional service to USDA on very complex matters that were highly sensitive and critical to the Department's image, integrity, and security."

GROUP ACHIEVEMENT

Education and Information

Michigan State 4-H Youth Program Staff, CES; East Lansing, Mich.

Emergency Preparedness

Emergency Operations Team, SCS; Somerset, Pa.

Southwest Virginia Extension District Team, CES; Abingdon, Va.

Management Effectiveness and Improvement

Animal Care Staff, APHIS; Hyattsville, Md.

Financial Management Division-Commodity Credit Corporation Interactive Budget System Task Force, ASCS; Washington, D.C.

Pendleton County Office, ASCS; Franklin, W. Va.

Soil Survey Editorial Management Team, SCS; Hyattsville, Md.

Unified Management Information System/Systems Improvement

Assistance Project Monitoring Task Team, OIG; Kansas City, Mo.

Word Processing Center, ESCS; Washington, D.C.

Marketing and Consumer Services

Hialeah Inspection Team, FSQS; Hialeah, Fla.

Meat and Poultry Inspection Training Center, FSQS; Fort Worth, Tex.

Poultry Quality Enforcement Team, FSQS; Washington, D.C.

Rural Community Development

Emergency Loan Division, FmHA; Washington, D.C.

Morehouse Parish Rural Development Committee; Bastrop, La.

Runnells County Rural Development Committee; Ballinger, Tex.

Sheridan County Rural Development Committee; Hoxie, Kans.

Scientific Research

Integrated Tuft-To-Yarn System Research Group, SEA; New Orleans, La.

Silviculture of the Allegheny Hardwoods Research Unit, FS; Warren, Pa.

USDA Winners of Major Non-USDA Awards



Frank Gearde, Jr., director of the Management Services Division, FNS; Washington, D.C.

Granted an Award of Special Merit for "distinguished work in the U.S. Government exemplifying in an outstanding manner the highest characteristics of public service through paperwork improvement and simplification." The award is

sponsored by the National Archives and Records Service and the Association of Records Managers and Administrators.



Sherwood B. Idso, research soil scientist, SEA; Phoenix, Ariz.

Recipient of 1977 Arthur S. Fleming Award which honors the 10 outstanding men and women under age 40 in the federal government.



Robert L. Ross, range conservationist, SCS; Bozeman, Mont.

One of ten 1977 government retirees selected for recognition under the first annual Federal Retiree of the Year Award Program. The National Association of Retired Federal Employees sponsors the awards to recognize outstanding contributions to public service during careers of federal employees.

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USDA Vol. 37, No. 12 June 7, 1978

Milton Sloane, Editor

Sharon Edwards, Editorial Assistant

Reserve
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Presidential Recognition

The following USDA employees have received agency awards and Presidential recognition for special achievements since January 1, 1977, which have resulted in benefits of

\$5,000 or more or for highly significant contributions in energy conservation, reorganization, paperwork reduction, regulation reform, and zero-base budgeting.

| Name | Headquarters | Agency | Category |
|---|--------------------------|--------|------------------------|
| Arnulfo Q. Antonio and Charles L. Thiel | Columbia, Mo. | SEA | Cost Reduction |
| John T. Barringer, Jr. | Washington, D.C. | REA | Energy Conservation |
| Ernest L. Corley | Washington, D.C. | SEA | Reorganization |
| Theodore R. Gardner | Washington, D.C. | FSQS | Cost Reduction |
| Richard Harris | Albuquerque, N. Mex. | FS | Cost Avoidance |
| Michael E. Mason and Robert E. Sherman | Washington, D.C. | OBP&E | Zero-Base Budgeting |
| Arthur P. Mayo | New Orleans, La. | O&F | Cost Reduction |
| Robert P. Tribble | San Francisco, Calif. | FS | Cost Reduction |
| George H. Roney | Washington, D.C. | ESCS | Cost Reduction |

New Administrator for ESCS

Secretary Bergland recently named **Kenneth R. Farrell** as head of the Economics, Statistics and Cooperatives Service.

Dr. Farrell had been acting head of ESCS since last January. ESCS was formed last fall under a reorganization plan that combined the Economic Research, Statistical Reporting, and Farmer Cooperative Services. The agency is responsible for developing and reporting statistical and economic information. It also provides assistance to farmer cooperatives and conducts economic research relating to food and nutrition, agriculture, natural resources, rural communities, and cooperatives.

Dr. Farrell has been an economics researcher and research manager for more than 20 years. He was deputy administrator of the former Economic Research Service. Dr. Farrell spent much of his career at the University of California where he developed and coordinated research and extension programs.

—Continued next page.

Dr. Ernest L. Corley (second from left), who had previously received a Presidential Letter of Commendation, accepts a 1977 Presidential Management Improvement Award for improving government operations. Dr. Corley was one of only eleven government employees to receive the award this year. He was honored for his unprecedented work in applying the Zero Base Budget process to developing the fiscal '79 budget, and for designing a management and planning system which has had a far-reaching impact in addressing domestic and world food needs. President Carter presented the award at a White House ceremony in the Rose Garden.



Job Hunting Made Simpler

Standard Form 171, the application probably used more widely than any other job form, is undergoing a major facelifting.

In its first significant revision of the form, the Civil Service Commission is redesigning the form to make it easier to read and easier to complete. It is also being revised to enable agencies to collect more specific information on applicants, and "to remove items which could be potentially discriminatory."

An applicant's weight and height, for instance, would no longer appear on the form, and would be requested only if a specific job requires it, the commission said. CSC also said the term "Ms." will be included on the new form for women who prefer to use it.

The commission added that the new form will:

- include a notice about the Privacy Act to tell applicants how and why the information is used.
- delete questions that ask job applicants to reveal their membership in specific organizations.
- modify the question on criminal

conviction to allow applicants to omit most misdemeanor convictions over seven years old, and add a note explaining that all convictions and firings do not necessarily disqualify a person for federal employment.

- highlight and clarify volunteer experience to ensure that appropriate credit is given to applicants.
- separate the questions about availability for travel and for part-time employment.
- ask applicants to indicate interest in and availability for referral to local, state, congressional, and public international organizations. This will allow the commission to assist such organizations if they ask for help in recruiting.

CSC said the new form will be slightly longer than the present one, and will be available by the middle of summer. Applicants will be required to use the new form after November 1. Individuals, however, will not have to submit the new version if they have a 171 currently on file.

Standard Form 171 evolved from the old SF 57 in 1968.



Kenneth R. Farrell, formerly acting head of ESCS, was named administrator by Secretary Bergland.

Continued from page 1.

Born in Ontario, Canada, Dr. Farrell is a graduate of the University of Toronto and holds M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from Iowa State University. He is the author of numerous reports relating to agricultural marketing, agricultural policy, and international trade. □

PEOPLE

Don Elder, the Department's television specialist with the Office of Governmental and Public Affairs, has been elected to the board of governors of the Washington, D.C., chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, Inc. He is one of the few federal public information people ever to be elected to this board and as a new member will serve a two-year term on the board. He is also a member of the National Association of Television Program Executives. Elder produces the two USDA television shows "A Better Way" and "Down to Earth."

Merwyn O. Reed, supervisor of the Hiawatha National Forest (Escanaba, Mich.), has been honored with a certificate of merit for his leadership and involvement in ensuring equal opportunity for women and minorities. He was also cited for

—Continued on page 4.

Personal Qualifications Statement

Read instructions before completing form

| | |
|---|--|
| 1 Kind of position (job) you are filing for (or title and number of announcement) | |
| 2 Options for which you wish to be considered (if listed in the announcement) | |
| 3 Home phone Area Code Number | 4 Work phone Area Code Number Extension |
| 5 Preferred title (mark one) Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/> Miss <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 6 Other last names ever used (e.g., Maiden) | |
| 7 Name (Last, First, Middle) Street address or RFD no. (include apartment no., if any) City State ZIP Code | |
| 8 Birthplace (City & State, or foreign country) | |
| 9 Birth date (Month, day, year) | 10 Social Security Number |
| 11 If you have ever been employed by the Federal Government as a civilian, give your highest grade, classification series, and job title. Dates of service in that grade (Month, day, and year) From To | |
| 12 If you currently have an application on file with the Civil Service Commission for appointment to a Federal position, (a) list the name of the area office maintaining your application, (b) the position for which you filed, and (if appropriate) (c) the date of your notice of rating, (d) your identification number, and (e) your rating | |

STANDARD FORM 171

PERSONAL QUALIFICATIONS STATEMENT

| | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1A Kind of position (job) you are filing for (or title of announcement) | B Announcement No. |
| C Options for which you wish to be considered (if listed in announcement) | |
| D Primary place(s) you wish to be employed | |
| 2 Home phone (including Area Code) | 3 Office phone (including Area Code) |
| 4 Name (Last) (First) (Middle) (Maiden, if any) <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Miss <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs. and Address (Number, Street, City, State and ZIP Code) | |
| 5 Legal or voting residence (State) | |
| 6 Height without shoes Feet Inches | 7 Weight |
| 8 Birthplace (City and State, or foreign country) | |
| 9 Birth date (Month, day, year) | 10 Social Security Account Number |
| 11 If you have ever been employed by the Federal Government as a civilian, give your last classification series, grade, and job title. Dates of service in that grade From To | |

Sample (left) of new Standard Form 171, "Personal Qualifications Statement," form is being revised to make it easier to read and complete. Slightly longer than current SF 171 (right), the new form will be available by mid-summer and will be required for use after November 1.

A Dream Coming True

Roscoe Taylor is about to fulfill a dream.

For years, he's been experimenting with thousands of tiny seeds in hopes of developing a new kind of product. Not just any kind of product, but a grain that is good enough to compete on the world market and can be grown in volume in Alaska, no less.

An agronomist in Alaska with USDA, Taylor had wanted a grain that was capable of maturing early (because of Alaska's short growing seasons) and was sturdy enough to stand up for cutting. It also had to be fairly shatter-resistant and have good, firm kernels with as much protein as possible.

Now after 25 years of testing and searching for the proper blend, Taylor is about to realize that dream. In another year or two, Taylor's grain strain may be ready for release. When it is, the grain will be released to Alaska's plant materials center, where it will be grown to increase the

seed supply. Then it will be made available to farmers.

"In the past four or five years," Taylor exclaimed, "I've really felt encouraged. I think we have a potential crop for exporting. Locally, there's not much of a market for wheat."

If the wheat is exported, it could generate a tremendous source of income for Alaskan farmers. "On the world market, wheat brings in almost twice as much as barley, which Alaska is also developing for export," Taylor said. Alaska is currently developing 50,000 acres of barley using seeds that Taylor cross-bred.

Taylor began his career in Alaska in 1952, after wheat research in the state had all but disappeared. Very little research had been done since the early part of the century when veteran agronomist **George W. Gasser** pioneered wheat experiments in the state. Although he didn't know it

at the time, Gasser laid the base for Taylor's later success.

During his career in Alaska, Gasser operated two experiment stations and developed a special blend of grain that supported a flour mill. But the grain was just not suitable for competing in the marketplace.

Arriving in Alaska, Taylor decided to continue Gasser's work and to conduct research on barley and oats as well.

He began by ordering 20,000 different types of wheat seeds—and 8,000 barley varieties—from USDA's plant breeding institute. The institute collects seeds and plants from around the world to develop improved crops.

Next, Taylor started testing the wheat seeds for the particular qualities he wanted, and later cross-bred them. The one specific quality Taylor was looking for was early crop maturity. Finally, Taylor selected the best seeds from his collection and cross-bred them with Gasser's seeds. The result is a strain that seems greatly improved over other varieties in Alaska.

Using similar test procedures with the barley seeds, Taylor successfully developed two new barley varieties that have great commercial value and a significantly high protein content. The barleys will be planted for the first time this year in the Delta Junction.

In addition to cross-breeding wheat and barley, Taylor is also devoting efforts to improving forage crops for dairy cattle and other livestock, particularly alfalfa. "Alfalfa is another good potential crop for Alaska that is not now grown here, because it can survive Alaska's winters and provides relief from the high cost of fertilizer," Taylor noted.

During his "off" seasons, Taylor enjoys hunting and fishing in the wilderness and traveling around the State in a camper. □



Crop scientist Roscoe Taylor examines wheat plants in the experimental growth chamber at Palmer, Alaska. Wheat research in Alaska was practically non-existent before Taylor began developing a wheat strain that may even be good enough to compete on the world market.



Merwyn O. Reed (left), forest supervisor for the Hiawatha National Forest, receives a certificate of merit from eastern regional forester Steve Yurich. Reed was cited for his leadership in the EEO program, providing jobs for unemployed youths, and for promoting special projects for handicapped youths.

Continued from page 2

providing jobs for students and nonstudents, and for promoting creation of special state projects for handicapped youths.

In presenting the award, regional forester **Steve Yurich** noted that 11 of the 26 employees on Reed's staff—and over one-half of the enrollees in the Young Adult Conservation Corps on the Hiawatha—are women and minorities.

Reed received the award during a special ceremony in Milwaukee, Wis.



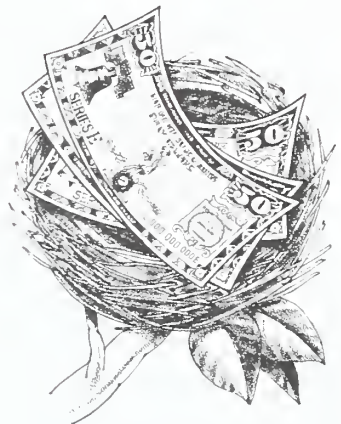
Car-Buying Tips

Will you be among the millions of people looking for a new car this year? To find out how to get the car you want, you may be interested in a new brochure. It points out steps to take before you buy, and suggests what to do if problems occur with the new machine. For a free copy of "Common Sense in Buying A New Car," send a postcard to the Consumer Information Center, Dept. 693F, Pueblo, Colo. 81009. □



Alfred Almanza (above right), processed food inspector and Hispanic employment coordinator in San Antonio, Tex., receives a special EEO award from Dr. Robert Angelotti, administrator of the Food Safety and Quality Service. The award was for outstanding contributions to the EEO program. Almanza was one of ten FSQS employees honored for their achievements at the agency's first annual EEO conference. Also honored (bottom photo, left to right) were: David Waughtal (Roberts, Wis.); Alphonso Hayden (Omaha, Neb.); Almanza; Jean O. Crisp (Alameda, Calif.); Gene Ovalle (Laredo, Tex.); Ralph Keill (Washington, D.C.); Reginald Malone (Miami, Fla.); Roy McDonald (Atlanta, Ga.); and John Mehl (Minneapolis, Minn.). Missing from the picture was honoree Dale H. Shearer (Chicago, Ill.). The conference was held to give Washington and field personnel an opportunity to discuss EEO concerns as well as to receive training.

Feather your nest.



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USDA Vol. 37, No. 13, June 21, 1978
Milton Sloane, Editor
Sharon Edwards, Editorial Assistant

Fame From Fungus

Some people have cities or monuments named after them. **Frances Lombard** has the rare distinction of having a fungus named after her.

A mycologist with the Forest Service, Lombard has achieved the high honor for her outstanding contributions to the study of fungi. The honor is particularly significant since fungi are rarely named after living persons.

The fungus named after Lombard, *Laeticorticium lombardiae*, is a newly discovered growth that attacks a species of poplar trees in Wisconsin and throughout Europe. It was discovered by **Dr. Michael Larsen**, a botanist with the Forest Service, who along with some of his colleagues named the fungus after Lombard.

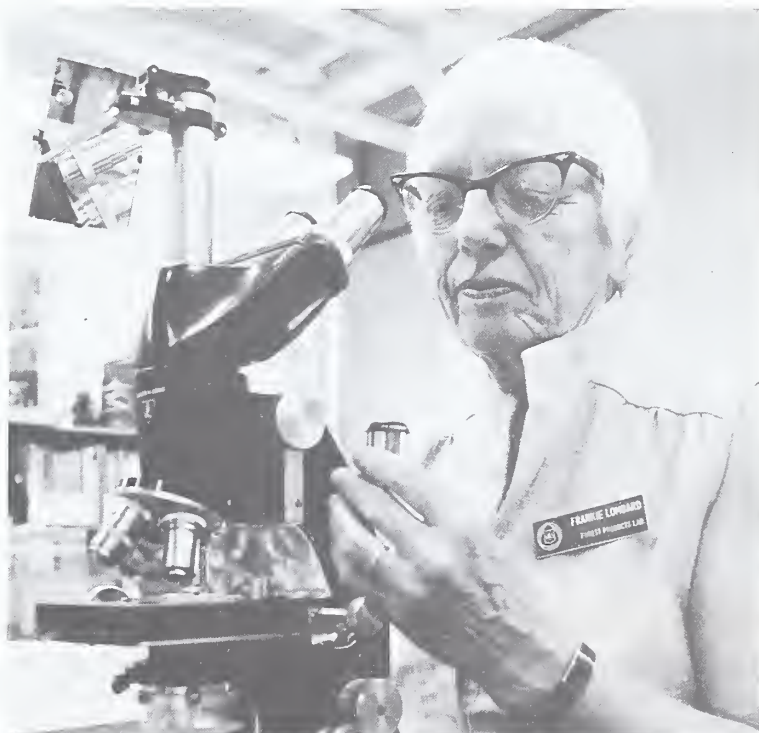
Known around the world, Lombard has been identifying fungi for over 39 years, first as a botanist and later as a mycologist. Her identifications have contributed significantly to many scholarly works on fungi.

At the Forest Products Laboratory in Madison, Wis., Lombard presides over the world's largest collection of living wood-decay fungi. The collection contains more than 13,000 cultures.

To surprise Lombard, Larsen kept the name of the fungus secret until Lombard read it in *Mycologia*, a respected journal on mycology. Described by her peers as demure and unassuming, Lombard commented, "It was the nicest thing anyone's ever done for me."



Francis "Frankie" Lombard stands before exhibit acknowledging her long-time work with fungi at the Forest Products Laboratory in Madison, Wis.



Lombard examines the fungus named in her honor which was discovered by Forest Service botanist Michael Larsen. Larsen and other scientists named the fungus after Lombard in respect for her renowned contributions in mycology.

Search Ends at SEA

Appointment of **Dr. Anson R. Bertrand**, dean of the college of agricultural sciences at Texas Tech University, has ended a nationwide search for a Director of Science and Education for USDA.

In making the appointment, **Secretary Bergland** said, "Dr. Bertrand's selection is the result of an exhaustive nationwide search for a highly qualified person. Dr. Bertrand brings to the Department a lifetime of experience and outstanding leadership in the food, agricultural, and natural resource sciences."

Dr. Bertrand was selected for the post from more than 130 nominees and 40 applicants. He will head the newly formed Science and Education Administration (SEA) which is responsible for more than 8,000 employees in agricultural research, extension, and higher education.

As director, Dr. Bertrand will administer USDA funds which contribute to the support of state



Anson R. Bertrand, former dean of agricultural sciences at Texas Tech University, has been appointed by Secretary Bergland to direct the Science and Education Administration.

cooperative extension services, agricultural experiment stations, state land-grant colleges and universities including Tuskegee Institute, cooperating forestry schools, and other institutions.

Born in Gatesville, Tex., Dr. Bertrand, 54, studied agricultural education at Texas A&M University. He was formerly director of the Soil and Water Conservation Center in Watkinsville, Ga., and chief of the southern branch of the Soil and Water Research Division. He also was chairman of the agronomy division at the University of Georgia.

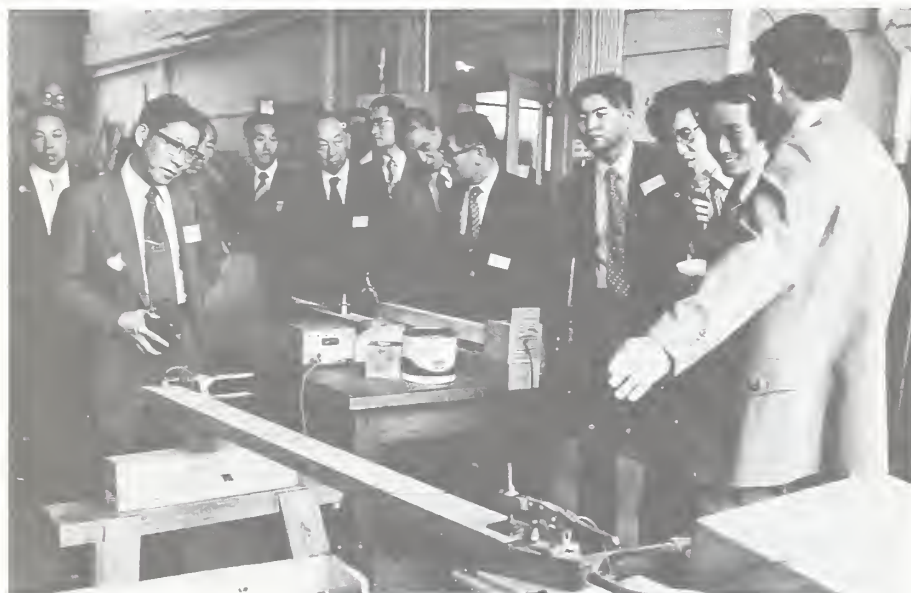
Dr. Bertrand has authored numerous publications, and served on several panels for the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences. Since 1976, he has been a member of the Board of International Food and Agricultural Development of the U.S. Department of State.

Assisting Secretary Bergland in the selection process that led to Dr. Bertrand's appointment were: USDA Assistant Secretary **M. Rupert Cutler**; **William D. Carey** of the American Association for the Advancement of Science; **Sylvia Lane**, University of California; **Jean Mayer**, president, Tufts University; **R.D. Morrison**, president, Alabama A&M University; **Harry M. Philpott**, president, Auburn University; **Philip Smith**, Office of Science and Technology Policy; **Harold Robinson**, chancellor, Western Carolina University; and **Sterling Wortman**, vice president, Rockefeller Foundation.

PEOPLE

Robert A. Barford, research chemist at the Eastern Regional Research Center, Wyndmoor, Pa., has received the 1978 Honor Scroll Award from the American Institute of Chemists. He was cited for his contributions to scientific knowledge, particularly in separating mixtures into their constituent parts.

Dr. Lonnie W. Standifer, director of the Bee Research Laboratory in Tucson, Ariz., has been honored with an outstanding scientist award from the National Consortium for Black Professional Development. The award was for his extensive research on pollen chemistry.



AH SO!

Japanese scientists, government officials, and industry representatives toured the Forest Products Laboratory in Madison, Wis., for an up-close look at wood research. They also got a briefing on the laboratory's role in setting standards for lumber quality, fire performance of wood materials, and wood finishing and preservation. The group also visited a Wisconsin manufacturer of modular homes. The tour was part of an effort to gain acceptance of U.S. lumber sizes and grades in Japan. Above, William Galligan (right), leader of engineering properties of wood at FPL, demonstrates an experimental system for evaluating the stiffness of wood.

Lending a Helping Hand

There's a saying that if you give a man a fish he can eat for a meal, but if you teach him *how* to fish he can eat the rest of his life.

At the Job Corps center in Butte, Mont., Forest Service personnel seem to have embraced the saying because they have adopted the motto, "Teach 'em how to work." Over the past 13 years, the 60-member staff has aided more than 6,000 unskilled youths in learning to become self-supporting.

Dealing mostly with high school dropouts, staff members have trained and educated young men in industrial arts and in secondary level coursework. The work takes place at the Anaconda Civilian Conservation Center on the Deerlodge National Forest.

The program emphasizes the 3 R's. It also provides training in such vocations as painting, decorating, welding, carpentry, heavy equipment operation and maintenance, auto repair, warehousing, and food services.

For many youths, the training is the springboard to greater achievements. For example, there are currently 20 graduates from the center attending college in the Midwest.

But while the training is designed to aid enrollees, it also benefits the center. Using their new skills, trainees at Anaconda have completed more than \$3 million worth of projects in and around the training center. That's how much it would cost to have the work done by outside contractors. The work ranged from developing campgrounds to extensive renovation and remodeling of center facilities. During forest fire season, the youths also serve as fire-fighters. Last summer, for instance, one crew of corpsmen worked on forest fires for 21 days in a row.

In addition to the formal training and



(Above left) Job Corps trainees at the Anaconda Center learn carpentry to help prepare themselves for a life of independence. The trainees (above right) are future mechanics, learning their trade in a spirit of cooperation.



After work is done, trainees get together (left) for recreation and some plain talk. For most, the after-work sessions afford an opportunity to try out ideas and get their problems off their chests.

occupational skills that will enable them to support themselves, the corpsmen also learn domestic independence by cooking, cleaning their rooms, and making their own beds. Dormitory living helps them to develop sociable, cooperative attitudes. Resident advisors are always available to assist with problems, make sure discipline is maintained, and generally act as second fathers to the corpsmen. At the center, the young men experience constructive and harmonious relationships in working and living with others and graduate better prepared to meet the responsibilities and challenges of adulthood.

Speaking of the program at Anaconda, **Don L. Temple**, director of the center, said: "The staff is very proud

to be part of the Job Corps program. They are well trained, sophisticated, and goal oriented. They know what needs to be done and how to do it. We all look forward to another productive 13 years."

Temple added that "In working together and achieving goals, the staff and trainees often form a common bond, and corpsmen frequently keep in touch long after graduation.

"Weddings, births, and other significant events in a corpsman's life are shared in letters to the center. Many of these cards and letters express in a variety of ways the graduate's innermost feelings that 'Job Corps was the turning point in my life.'"

Blair Balances Books

June Blair has more credits than a Hollywood actress.

Since her high school days as valedictorian, she's been a comptroller for a charitable organization, senior accountant and supervisor for a publishing firm, chief accountant and financial advisor for an anti-poverty group, and branch chief of a government agency. She has also been named in "Who's Who in Government" (1977).

Currently, Blair is president of the American Society of Women Accountants, and a member of Soroptimists International and the Association of Government Accountants.

Not one to rest on her laurels, Blair has added another credit to her list. She was recently appointed director of the finance division in USDA's Food Safety and Quality Service. As such, Blair is one of only a handful of

women ever chosen as a division director in USDA, and one of only a slightly larger number—27 to be exact—of female careerists in the Department in grades GS-15 and above.

In her new role, Blair is responsible for managing a budget of more than \$500,000,000 a year. She is also responsible for reviewing and analyzing state meat and poultry inspection programs—operated cooperatively with USDA—as well as state egg inspection programs. Blair is further responsible for negotiating indirect costs incurred by a state in carrying out its inspection programs. Such costs include payment for salaries and utilities, for operating and maintaining buildings, and for other indirect expenses benefiting the programs.

Blair began her career in USDA in 1967 with the Consumer and Marketing Service, which was the forerunner to the present Agricultural Marketing Service. In 1974, she became chief of the branch that negotiated indirect costs.

Before being named to her present position, Blair had been acting finance director since May 1977. In 1973, she received a \$1,500 cash award and a certificate of merit for discovering a costly error in the formula being used throughout government to compute indirect costs on federal grants to states. Since then, Blair has completed the Executive Development Program, won a certificate of appreciation for a proposal made during the program, and received a quality pay increase.

When she's not balancing the books, Blair frequently speaks at local schools and colleges on accounting in general and women accountants in particular. She also devotes a fair amount of time to community activities. For one activity, Blair helped tabulate pledges during a Washington-area radio-thon for leukemia. She did so by volunteering for the early Sunday shift from 4 a.m. to 8 a.m.



June P. Blair, one of only a handful of women ever to serve as a division director in USDA, manages a budget of more than half-billion dollars a year. Blair is finance director for FSQS.

Born in Portland, Ore., Blair graduated summa cum laude from Benjamin Franklin University in 1954. She commutes to and from work from her home in Virginia with her husband John, who is an accountant with USDA's Food and Nutrition Service. The Blairs have four children and three grandchildren.

About her accomplishments, Blair says simply that she is interested in her profession, "and when you are interested in your work, you always strive to be better and do more."



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USDA Vol. 37, No. 14, July 5, 1978
Milton Sloane, Editor
Sharon Edwards, Editorial Assistant

Rosy Future.



**Take stock in America.
Buy U.S. Savings Bonds.**

Ag 840
p. 2

The CIA of Agriculture: Crop Intelligence Agents

About 45 times this year, a small group of experts, escorted by heavily armed guards, will enter an underground area roughly midway between the White House and the Pentagon and isolate themselves from the world.

They will lock themselves in a room with the telephones disconnected, and proceed to analyze some high-level data. Outside, armed guards will maintain tight security over the area and not allow anyone to enter except authorized personnel. To guard against any information leaks, food will be sent in to the experts, and no one will be permitted to leave the room until 1500 hours (3 p.m.).

As an added precaution, a computer system providing the experts with high-speed information will be secured against tampering.

Inside their guarded quarters, the eight highly trained experts will piece together information that could decide the nation's survival.

Intelligence agents of a sort, the experts are members of USDA's Crop Reporting Board. Their mission, as part of the Economics, Statistics and Cooperatives Service, is to prepare the facts and figures that will influence this country's biggest business—agriculture—and determine our food supply.

The data they will "piece together" are estimates from the states on future production of corn, wheat, cotton, soybeans, potatoes, oranges, cattle, and hogs. Since these commodities are speculative (meaning that they have potential for huge profit-making), the guards' job is to make certain that no one outside the



Meeting behind locked doors, with armed guards stationed outside, members of USDA's Crop Reporting Board review state estimates on upcoming production of crops.

board gains access to the information before it is publicly released, and that no one tries to influence the board's decisions.

During the lock-up, the board will analyze the state forecasts which were mailed in specially marked envelopes and given top priority handling.

(When the envelopes arrive in Washington, they are immediately placed in a special steel box fastened by two individual locks. The key to one lock is kept in the Office of the Secretary; the key to the other is kept by the chairman of the board.

(Early in the morning on review day, the box is opened under armed guard, the contents are removed and taken to the board room.)

After the board has reviewed the forecasts, it then establishes an

official estimate on nationwide production and develops a crop report. The report will be presented to the Secretary of Agriculture for his signature, then it will be released.

Release of the report will be carefully timed to assure equal access by all concerned, and to prevent anyone from gaining advance information.

Once the report is signed, copies are carried to a press room where they are placed face down in phone booths, while reporters stand behind a bold white line. At exactly 3 p.m. Eastern time, the report is released to the reporters and its contents flashed nationwide. Highlights of the report will be carried nationally over radio, television, news services, and in newspapers. In the evening after the report is released, farmers can dial a toll-free number (800-424-7964) to hear a summary of the estimates.

—Continued next page.



After the board reviews state forecasts and makes necessary adjustments, official estimates are presented to Agriculture Secretary for signature. Witnessing signing by Secretary Bergland, above, is board chairman Bruce Graham, right.

With speculative crops, the board's estimates are never released until after the major futures markets close. That way, all interested persons have time to analyze the estimates before trading starts the next business day. Reports for nonspeculative crops, or for all other agricultural commodities, are published at less rigidly controlled times.

Serving as the pulse of the agricultural industry, the reports provide an in-depth reading on what's taking place in agriculture so that food producers can make informed decisions. The reports refer only to current growing seasons, and are not projections for several years ahead.

The reports provide estimates of acreages farmers intend to plant in the coming season, the acres planted and harvested, production and disposition of crops, and amounts of remaining stocks. Reports also provide estimates on crop yield at harvest.

Using the reports, farmers and ranchers can work out their plans for breeding, feeding, planting, storing, purchasing, and marketing their commodities. They can decide, for example, whether to feed more cattle, cut hog production, switch from corn to producing soybeans, or to hold wheat off the market in hopes of

getting a better price.

Besides the crop reports, the board also publishes forecasts on livestock, poultry, dairy, seeds, fertilizer, flowers, bees and honey, mink, the weather, prices, labor and wages, number of farms, and related agricultural topics.

Altogether, the board publishes more than 500 reports a year giving state and national estimates for 150 crops, 50 related livestock products, and other agricultural items. Additionally, ESCS' 44 field offices publish local information on acreages, yields, production, and so forth, for all 50 states.

In addition to their use by farmers, the reports are also used widely by an almost endless list of farming interests, such as buyers, millers, packers, warehouses, railroads, banks, insurance companies, farm organizations, and Members of Congress. Universities, governments, and private economists use the reports to predict supply and



Board chairman Graham leaves lock-up with copies of signed report for release to waiting reporters.



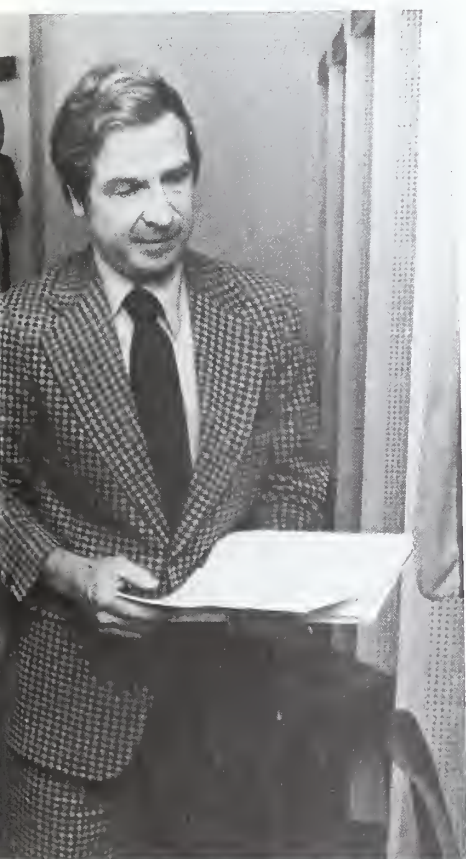
In press room, copies of report are placed, stand by for designated hour of release. (Note top center of photo.)

demand factors farmers are likely to encounter.

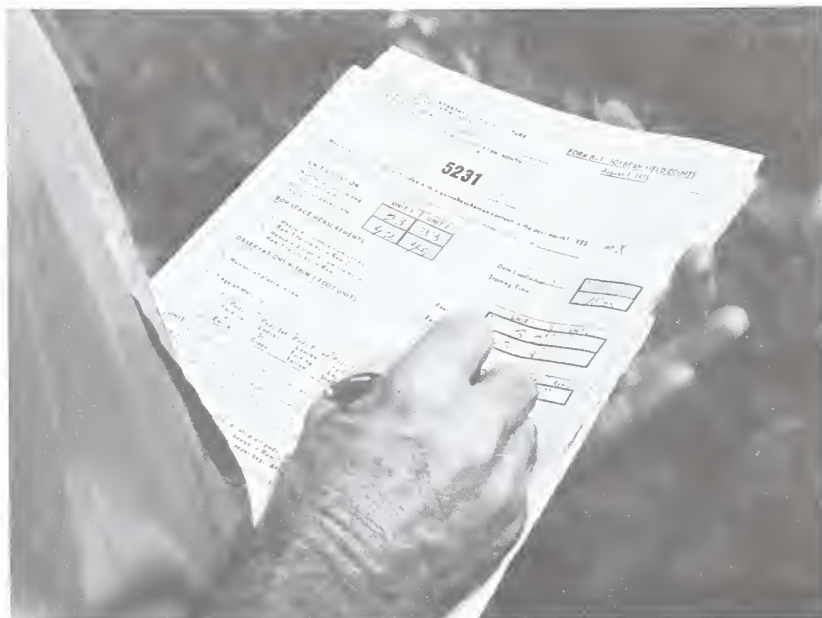
Information for the reports is obtained largely through sample surveys conducted by ESCS employees by mail, telephone, in person, and in the field. ESCS explains that the sampling method provides reliable results and is far less costly and less time-consuming than trying to make a complete count.

In one type of survey, trained ESCS field personnel—known as enumerators—visit farmers in

selected sections of land for information about their crops, livestock, and other operations. Varying in size, the sections average about one square mile in most agricultural areas. Although the total land involved in the survey parcels is less than one percent of the land in the 48 contiguous states, survey techniques assure that the sections are representative of U.S. agriculture.



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Estimates reviewed by the board are developed by ESCS field personnel from questionnaires, interviews with farmers, and from mail and telephone surveys.

During their survey enumerators interview approximately 60,000 farmers in 16,000 land segments, and contact an additional 17,000 large livestock farms.

Working out of state offices, the enumerators use county road maps and aerial photographs to define precisely the boundaries of the selected area segments. After locating the appropriate farmers, the enumerators explain the purpose and importance of the survey and ask a specific series of questions. After recording the answers, the enumerators send the filled-out questionnaires to an ESCS field office where they are checked for completeness and for use in making crop forecasts.

Later, during the growing season and with farmers' permission, the enumerators make on-the-spot examinations of crops in the fields. They do so by walking a given number of rows and paces into the fields and marking off a sample plot. The enumerator then counts the number of plants within the sample plot and measures the distance between rows. This indicates the plant population per acre. Next, the enumerator counts the mature and immature fruit within the plot, such

as ears of corn, cotton bolls, and wheat heads, to determine the yield per plant.

The information is then turned over to statisticians who use the data to arrive at an estimated yield per acre. Statisticians then multiply the yield per acre by the total number of acres planted within the state, for a statewide production forecast.

Monthly during the growing season, enumerators will repeat their visits to farms and hand-harvest the sample plot when the crop is ripe for laboratory analysis. After the farmer harvests the rest of the field, the enumerators will make a final visit to examine a small section to determine harvesting loss and arrive at a net crop yield.

During a recent season, enumerators set up sample plots in 3,400 corn fields in 20 major producing states, 2,500 cotton fields in 14 states, 2,100 potato fields in 12 states, and nearly 1,900 wheat fields in 15 states.

In another type of survey, estimates are made of grain stored on farms by mailing questionnaires to 80,000 farmers. For grain stored off farms,



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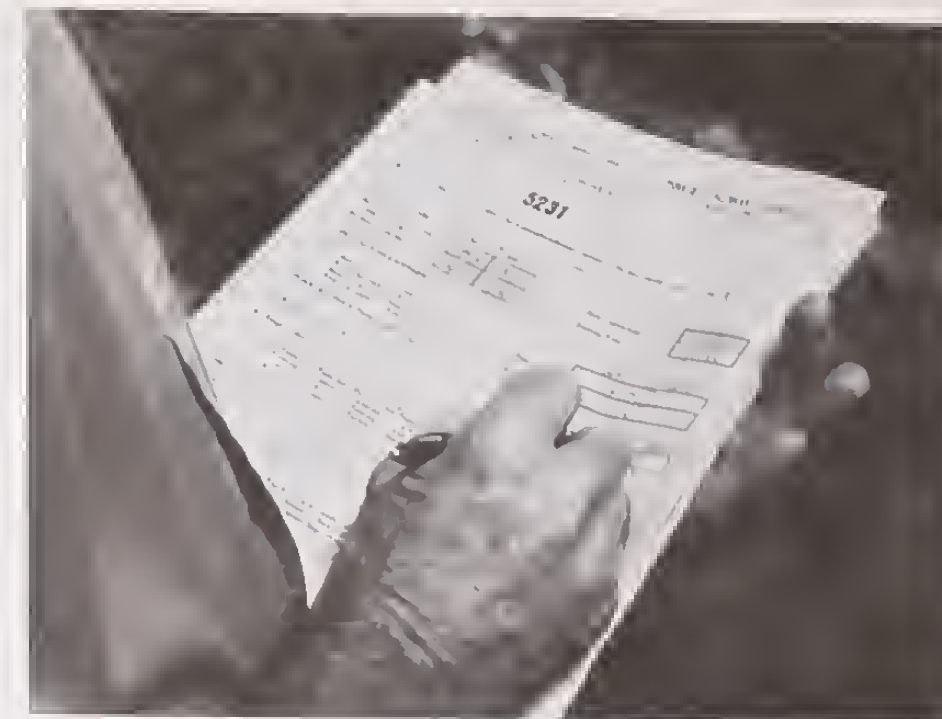
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Information is also obtained through on-the-spot inspections by measuring crops growing in the field . . .



. . . by measuring the distance between rows of crops to determine plant population . . .

estimates are made from contacts with grain mills and elevators, oilseed processors, and USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service.

Estimates for livestock, dairy, and poultry cover a wide variety of items ranging from eggs in incubators through ice cream manufacturing. For many livestock and dairy products, information from marketings, hatcheries, slaughter, and processing plant production is used as a check on the accuracy of the estimates.

Participation in surveys is completely voluntary by farmers, and any information a farmer gives is strictly confidential. Information from farmers is used only to form state summaries for review by the Crop Reporting Board. Of the board's membership, only the chairman and secretary are regular members; the other six members change with each report. All are professionals of ESCS and include field office statisticians and Washington commodity specialists.

Over the years, the board has improved its forecasting abilities, even though adjustments are always



. . . and by counting the number of plants within a sample area.

needed because of weather, disease, and other occurrences. In its first estimate of corn production two decades ago, the board came within seven percent of the total amount harvested. In recent years, the margin of difference has narrowed to an average of three percent.

Despite that difference, however, every year decisions involving billions of dollars are based on the board's reports.

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Milton Sloane, Editor
Sharon Edwards, Editorial Assistant

A Success Story 25 Years In The Making



Displaying as much interest in her students as the day they were hired, Edmondson (right) examines work of four Vincennes University sophomores enrolled in USDA work-study programs. The students are planning insect diets as one of the many tasks they perform which enable scientists to devote more time to research. The students work at the Fruit and Vegetable Insects Research Station in Vincennes, Ind. Left to right, the students are Emanuel Bryant, pre-med major; Cindy Newton, home economics major; Mickey McPheter, drafting major; and Karen Wolfe, home economics.



Edmondson (right) also watches as trainees mount peachtree borers on paper for counting. Left to right, the trainees are Thomas Minderman, from Indiana University; Jenny Bailey, Vincennes University; and Guadalupe Lopez, a Mexican National enrolled under the General Educational Development program.

When it comes to getting the most out of something, nobody does it like **Dorathe Edmondson**.

For 25 years, Edmondson has used various programs to maximum advantage to help the handicapped, veterans, and the disadvantaged.

Edmondson is an administrative clerk with the Science and Education Administration at the research station in Vincennes, Ind. She has helped hundreds of youths become gainfully employed while continuing their education under specially designed work-study programs. These include the Student Aid, Summer Aid, and the President's Stay-in-School programs, as well as the Summer Program for Education and Development of Youth, and the Comprehensive Education and Training Act, General Educational Development, Internship, and work-study programs for students from Purdue, Indiana, Indiana State, and Vincennes Universities.

This year, Edmondson set a record by employing 31 youths at the research complex.

Discussing her efforts in the work-study program, Edmondson said, "I want to make sure that young people in our community who need work or who want to plan careers in agriculture are aware of employment opportunities at the research station. Of the current program participants, most are high school seniors or college students who plan careers in entomology, medicine, biology, horticulture, or agricultural engineering. Generally, the students work two years at the station in the summer and during school terms.

—Continued next page.

"My young people really work," Edmondson exclaimed, adding that "if they are kept busy, the students will want to come back and work the following years." And most of them do.

As part of their training, the students perform a variety of tasks such as collecting seeds, tagging plants, extracting pupae, collecting insects, and when it rains, cataloging journals. In performing these tasks, the students provide a tremendous service to the center by freeing scientists and lab technicians to conduct vital research.

"The students claim that they can't help being enthusiastic about the work because I am," Edmondson admitted. "And when you love your work and the people around you, it means everything."

Therese Moore, a high school senior, says of her experiences at the station: "I've worked at a lot of places, but I like this place better."

Ag Attache Appointed

Secretary Bergland has appointed **Robert E. Anlauf** of the Foreign Agricultural Service as agricultural attache to the Dominican Republic. Anlauf will serve on the staff of the U.S. Embassy in Santo Domingo.

Former assistant agricultural attache to the Soviet Union, Anlauf had until recently been assigned to FAS' tobacco division. He joined FAS in 1973 as an agricultural economist in the livestock division, where he served until he was assigned to Moscow in 1975.

In his new assignment, Anlauf will have responsibility for agricultural reporting and market development activities in the Dominican Republic.

Last year, the United States exported \$102 million worth of agricultural products to that country, mostly in

Richard Robertson, a sophomore at Purdue University, said, "I've learned a lot at the research station. I really feel I'm an important part of something here."

Saying she "would like to come back," **Lucinda Newton**, a college student working under the Summer Aid program, added that "the work is so interesting and I really enjoy the people."

Placement officers for the program say that the research station is "a prime work site," and feel that the youths there are getting better training than they would elsewhere.

Asked how difficult it is to employ students under the programs, Edmondson declared that there's less red tape to go through than with other government programs. "All it takes is a little initiative," she said, "and the ability to know how to ask so that no one can refuse you!"

Although she's been offered numerous jobs with promotions, Edmondson says she likes her posi-

tion and location too much to leave.

Edmondson is frequently invited to meetings to speak about her involvement in work-study and about her role as regional coordinator of the Federal Women's Program. At a recent area directors meeting, SEA deputy director T.W. Edminster praised Edmondson for her outstanding work.

Edmondson has become so widely respected that whenever anyone asks about work-study programs, **Raymond J. Bula**, area director at Lafayette, Ind., refers them immediately to Edmondson. "If she says something can be done," Bula observed, "you just know that it can be done."

When she's not busy putting people to work, Edmondson takes time at home to weave, hook rugs, carve wood, needlepoint, create floral bouquets, and paint in water colors and oils. □

Summer Employees Have Rights, Too

In a precedent-setting case, the Federal Employees Appeal Authority ruled that government agencies cannot reduce summer employees' work hours unless proper procedures are followed.

FEAA made the ruling in a case involving several employees who had their work schedules cut from 40 to 35 to 30 hours a week. The employees had been hired for full-time summer duty.

In handing down the decision, FEAA noted that civil service regulations state that, under certain conditions, reducing the number of work hours a week for seasonal employees is an adverse action. It is an adverse action, the regulations state, when a reduction conflicts with arrangements made when employees were originally hired.

Since the employees in this case had been appointed to full-time duty, FEAA ruled that an adverse action had occurred, and ordered the change in work hours cancelled.



Robert E. Anlauf, newly appointed agricultural attache to the Dominican Republic and former attache to Soviet Union.

the form of corn, wheat, soybean oilcake, and meal.

Born in Kiowa, Okla., Anlauf received bachelor's and master's degrees from Texas A&I University. □

Building A Better Life

All over the country communities seldom heard of are using USDA loans to improve life for their citizens.

Columbia, La., for instance, got a \$436,000 loan to construct a natural gas system for its residents.

In Iron River, Mich., the local building authority received a \$220,000 USDA loan to provide off-street parking in the town's business district.

In Iowa, a Cumberland shipping firm got a \$265,000 loan to improve and maintain a railroad line from Orient, Iowa, to Cumberland. The firm indicated that the trackbed needed improving to transport farm materials such as grain, fertilizer, and machinery.

In Brazil, Ind., a local company used a \$728,000 USDA loan to build a swimming pool for the town's 8,000 residents.

The loans to these communities were made by the Farmers Home Administration under the Community Facility Loan Program. That program makes loans possible for a wide variety of purposes, depending upon a community's needs. The loans can be made to such public entities as counties, municipalities, and special purpose districts, as well as, in some cases, to nonprofit corporations.

Often communities use the loans to finance hospital equipment and to improve medical facilities.

Newton, N.J., Memorial Hospital, for example, used a \$10.5 million loan to upgrade its patient facilities, including buying 78 medical-surgical beds, 19 pediatric beds, 20 obstetric beds, and 44 beds and bassinets for the maternity ward.

Other items on community shopping lists are firefighting facilities and equipment.

Milford, Del., got a \$380,000 loan to build a new firehouse, while Clinton,



Typical of the many projects for which FmHA loans are used are this new hospital (above) in Alamo, Tenn., and a new library (below) in Colquitt, Ga. Under the community facilities loan program, FmHA lent \$200 million in fiscal 1977 and has been appropriated \$250 million for fiscal 1978.



Md., bought a firetruck with a \$50,000 USDA loan.

Schools and libraries also are among the most popular community facilities, and many loans are made to develop these services.

Eloy, Ariz., used an \$860,000 loan to make additions to an existing school, including adding 24 classrooms, a media center, cafetorium, and administration building.

Other communities and groups use the loans to meet special problems and situations peculiar to their areas.

Hiawassee, Ga., got a \$400,000 loan to construct "Pioneer Village," featuring craft shops and related facilities depicting the cultural heritage of the area. Denison, Iowa, received a \$65,500 loan to build a housing facility for physically and mentally handicapped women. And Eufaula, Ala., (population approximately 9,000) got a \$3.8 million loan to build almost everything it needed—a new school, new firehouse, and city hall.

But that's what the loans are for: to help communities meet community needs.



Three young men with their eyes on the future are Riley Henderson (left), Gilbert Riojas (second from left), and David Brotherton (right). Summer trainees with the Crop and Livestock Reporting Service in Austin, Tex., Henderson, Riojas, and Brotherton will be promoted to full-time professional positions with USDA upon receiving their bachelor's degree and meeting certain requirements. The three are students at Prairie View A&M, Texas A&M, and Texas Tech Universities, respectively. In Austin, the students participate in special training programs and receive on-the-job experience that will aid them in reaching their goal of a career in agricultural statistics. Pictured with the trainees is Dave Humphrey, a mathematical statistician with the students' prospective employer, the Economics, Statistics and Cooperatives Service.

Happy Trails To You!

Camping and hiking are great outdoor fun. But it's no fun if you break a leg or lose your way.

To help prepare you for a peaceful and successful outing, the Forest Service has published a booklet on things to know before you start. "Outdoor Safety Tips," PA-887, helps you enjoy and protect our national forests.

The booklet suggests that on any camping trip you:

- Plan your travel route. If possible, get maps of the areas you'll be visiting, and inquire locally before traveling into back country.
- Wear appropriate clothing, including sturdy shoes or boots. Always carry essential equipment such as matches in a waterproof container, compass, knife, first-aid kit, insect repellent, and a police whistle, in case you need to signal for help.
- Tell someone where you are going and when you expect to return.
- Travel alone *only* if you're an experienced camper and hiker.

- Stay with your group. Exploring on your own on unfamiliar ground can be dangerous—fatal if you are seriously injured.
- Be observant. Follow your planned route and note landmarks, streams, and other points of reference. Be alert for such hazards as poisonous snakes and plants.
- Stay calm, if you do get lost. Stop, sit down, and think. If you decide to push on, do so only under good conditions, such as daylight, good weather, and a chance that that you can get your bearings. Otherwise, try to find shelter and signal for help. The universal call for help is three signals in rapid succession repeated at regular intervals: three shots, three flashes from a mirror, three blasts on a whistle, three puffs of smoke. If you build a signal fire, add wet leaves or green branches for more smoke. Always keep any fire you build under control.
- Remember that exposure to the elements is more dangerous than hunger and thirst. You may live more than a week without food,

for three days without water, but for only a few *hours* in severe weather.

For more tips on outdoor safety, send 35 cents for a copy of "Outdoor Safety Tips" to the Consumer Information Center, Dept. 082F, Pueblo, Colo. 81009. □

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Milton Sloane, Editor
Sharon Edwards, Editorial Assistant

Scientist Seizes Opportunity

Karl Norris is a researcher who takes what he can get.

Sixteen years ago, Norris set out on what he expected to be a simple task—to design a system capable of measuring the moisture content in wheat. Instead, Norris may have designed a system that will revolutionize the grain marketing industry.

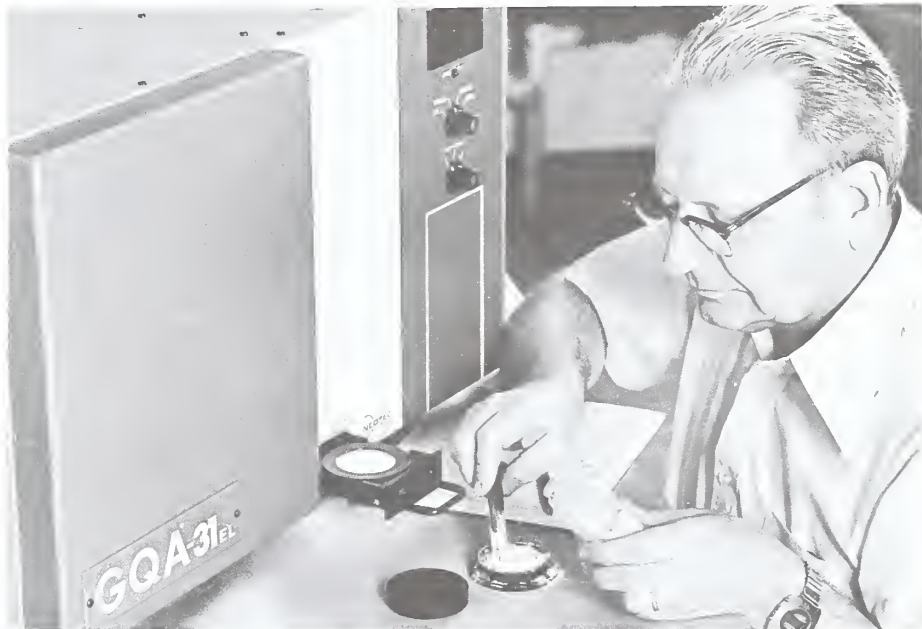
Norris' invention, an Infrared Reflectance Spectroscope (IRS, for short), represents the first major breakthrough since the 1880's in protein analysis of cereal grains and oilseeds.

It is a simple, inexpensive system that measures not only moisture in wheat, but the nutritive value of seeds and plants as well. The system consists of a multi-filtered instrument, with a built-in computer, that measures the amount of infrared light reflected by plants, automatically computes chemical composition, and digitally displays oil, protein, and moisture content. And it does it in less than two minutes.

"Essentially," said Norris, an engineer at the Agricultural Research Center in Beltsville, Md., "the system can be used to measure the content of any farm product."

Elated over his discovery, although he admits it wasn't his original goal, Norris said he invented the system after first experimenting with wheat. When he started using soybeans, he said, he noticed that the oil from the beans interfered with the moisture readings. Next, he discovered that the protein content also interfered. So, Norris took a different tack and began measuring all three—moisture, oil, and protein. About a year later, in October 1971, his system was ready for demonstration.

—Continued next page.



Preparing to use his grain testing system, engineer Karl H. Norris places powdered wheat in disk for protein analysis. In less than two minutes, the infrared reflectance system will provide a digital readout on nutrient content in sample. Still undergoing research, system is already in use by some grain companies and by the Federal Grain Inspection Service.



For his invention, Norris (center) accepts the prestigious Alexander von Humboldt Award for 1978. The annual award was presented for the most significant contribution to American agriculture in the past one to three years. Presenting the award were Lore Toepfer (left), a trustee of the von Humboldt Foundation, and Karl-Hugo Schlunk, the foundation's general manager.

A Lateral Transfer

Citing the need for greater improvements in the EEO program, Secretary Bergland has established new functions for the Office of Equal Opportunity. In a recent memo, the Secretary ordered the transfer of civil rights and related activities from the Office of Personnel to OEO.

In directing the transfer, the Secretary said that although "we have made substantial progress in developing equal employment opportunity, the Department must initiate new and positive measures to bring about needed improvements in the program. Accordingly, it is my purpose to bring together the responsibilities for Department-level EEO and civil rights programs. I intend this change to result in a comprehensive approach to equal employment opportunity in USDA."

Secretary Bergland also directed **Assistant Secretary Joan S. Wallace** to conduct a study to determine what additional changes may be made, in both Washington and the field, to improve the responsiveness of civil rights and EEO matters Departmentwide.

The Secretary ordered the following functions transferred from the Office of Personnel:

- processing of formal EEO discrimination complaints by employees as well as by job applicants
- coordination of activities of agency EEO counselors, as related to Department policies and procedures
- development, implementation, and coordination of the Federal Women's Program
- development, implementation, and coordination of the Hispanic Employment Program
- administration of the discrimination

Continued from page 1.

Although research is continuing on the system, three U.S. companies are already manufacturing instruments based on Norris' principles for testing grain. The technique is being used by companies handling as little as a few thousand bushels of grain per week to over a million bushels a day. USDA's Federal Grain Inspection Service is also using the system to test wheat for protein prior to export.

Norris said that research is continuing to measure other ingredients such as sugar, starch, fiber, and amino acids. Researchers at Penn State University are trying to analyze animal feed with the system. If successful, the test would enable

[illegible]

tion appeals and complaints
program for the Department

- performance of staff work for the director of EEO, including the preparation of decisions on discrimination complaints
- preparation of regulations, plans, and procedures necessary to carry out the Department's EEO programs
- responsibility for liaison on EEO matters with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Civil Service Commission, USDA agencies, and others.

The Secretary further authorized Assistant Secretary Wallace and **Dr. Howard Hjort**, director of economics and budget for USDA, to take such steps as are necessary to implement the changes (such as the transfer of funds, personnel, employment authority, space, records, property, and incidentals).

Jim Frazier, director of the Office of Equal Opportunity, said the changes will be made by October 1.

Highlighting some of its accomplishments during the past year,

farmers to increase meat and milk production, and save millions of dollars a year in forage costs. Cost of the unit for grain analysis is \$15,000, and cost per test ranges from \$.50 to \$10.00 depending upon the number of samples.

For his discovery, Norris has been honored with the 1978 Alexander von Humboldt Award, named after the German scientist who studied earth sciences and ecology during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The prestigious award consists of \$10,000 and a medallion and certificate. Norris was presented the award for "the most significant contribution to American agriculture during the past one to three years."

OEO noted in its 1977 annual report, recently released through the Department, that actions were initiated that will result in USDA policies prohibiting discrimination by age, sex, race, or handicap in USDA programs in 1978; the value of contracts awarded to minority firms increased slightly from \$6.3 million in 1976 to \$6.4 million in 1977; and an agreement was reached between USDA and the Department of the Interior providing for soil and water conservation assistance on Indian trust lands.

The report also noted that—

—program complaints alleging discrimination increased from 213 in 1976 to 290 in 1977

—USDA aid to black land-grant colleges increased slightly from \$20.5 million in 1976 to \$21.7 million the following year

—deposits by USDA agencies in minority owned banks decreased by almost half, from \$1.5 million in 1976 to \$862,000 in 1977

—minorities received 2.3 percent of the farm ownership loans made by the Farmers Home Administration in 1977.

A Forest Service First

Practicing what it preaches, equal opportunity, the Forest Service civil rights committee has elected its first woman—and its first Indian—chairperson. She is **Beverly Holmes**, staff specialist for the Forest Service's deputy chief of research.

Holmes is a member of the Cherokee tribe who began her government career in 1968. She joined the Forest Service in 1974 as a personnel management specialist in Ogden, Utah. In 1977, she was promoted to program analyst and transferred to her present position in Washington, D.C.

Born in Tulsa, Okla., Holmes was named Federal Woman of the Year by the Bureau of Indian Affairs in 1973. She was formerly chairperson of the Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Council of Utah, and an instructor of Indian culture and women's programs at Weber State College in Ogden.

As civil rights committee head, Holmes will be responsible for preparing the agenda for the committee's quarterly regional meetings, and serve as the link between the

committee and the Forest Service Chief.

Made up of employees from around the country, the committee coordinates the Forest Service's affirmative action plan to ensure equal opportunity to all without regard to race, sex, age, religion, handicap, or national origin. The committee also works with agency program divisions on a wide range of related activities: recruitment of women and minorities; personnel training; upward mobility; financial assistance to civil rights programs; minority business enterprise; supervisors' commitment to civil rights; and community outreach to make minorities aware of Forest Service benefits and services.

As head of the committee, Holmes succeeds **Bob Chadwick**, forest supervisor of the Winema National Forest in Oregon. Other committee members are **Joseph Guss**, Denver, Colo.; **Betty McNutt**, Tempe, Ariz.; **Mack Hogams**, Seattle, Wash.; **Bonnie Newman**, Twin Falls, Idaho; **Charles Bazan**, Penasco, N. Mex.; **Miguel Aragon**, Milwaukee, Wis.; **Jim Bell**, Atlanta, Ga.; **Dorothy Stennis**, Ketchikan, Alas.; and **Mildred Otwell**, Washington, D.C.



Beverly Holmes, newly elected head of the Forest Service's civil rights committee, holds gavel and anvil presented to her by her predecessor, Bob Chadwick.

Dr. Angelotti Resigns

Dr. Robert Angelotti, administrator of the Food Safety and Quality Service, has resigned. A former director of the Food and Drug Administration, Dr. Angelotti had headed FSQS since July 1977.

In accepting Dr. Angelotti's resignation, **Assistant Secretary Carol Foreman** said: "The experience, skill, and dedication you brought to this job have been of great value in the creation and development of FSQS. I commend you for the enormous amount of work that the agency has accomplished during your tenure."

Named as acting administrator of the agency, until a permanent administrator is selected, is **Sydney J. Butler**, who will also continue to serve as deputy assistant secretary for food and consumer services.

PEOPLE

Thomas P. Netting, chief of radio-TV services for the Economics, Statistics and Cooperatives Service, has received the Pioneer ACE Award for the Washington, D.C., region. He was cited for his outstanding performance in producing a monthly TV feature for urban stations, and for other professional work in agricultural communications. The award was presented by the American Association of Agricultural College Editors in Asheville, N.C.



Take
stock
in America.

G-E-R-O-N-I-M-O!

Residents of Missoula, Mont., might have had a moment of panic when the sky filled with unidentified falling objects.

What they saw were 150 paratroopers from the State National Guard undergoing training on Forest Service land. The training was part of a two-week course, conducted at the Forest Service's smokejumper center, to give the guardsmen basic airborne experience.

The training included mass parachute jumps from huge C-130 Air Force transports, and was conducted in part on Forest Service devices. The National Guard conducted the course with assistance from Forest Service personnel. The staff included instructors from the Regular Army Special Forces, in both Montana and Fort Bragg, N.C. Trainees for the program came from as far away as Alaska, and from West Virginia, Colorado, Utah, California, and Montana.

John C. Robertson, leader of fire suppression and aviation management in Missoula, explained that during their training many of the trainees and staff were housed in the Forest Service dormitory and were given full access to the smokejumper center's facilities.

The course was the first one conducted by the Army nationwide, and the first time ever a program that size had been held at the Forest Service Center.



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Milton Sloane, Editor
Sharon Edwards, Editorial Assistant



Summer employees in Washington, D.C., received a rousing welcome to USDA from Assistant Secretary Joan Wallace (left) who told the youths in Jefferson Auditorium that "although we all bring special skills to our jobs, we are all reinforcing those skills from our experiences here. I hope that each of you will leave USDA this summer with great enthusiasm from your experiences and for your contributions to the Department." Personnel Director Sy Pranger (below) told the students about the broad range of USDA programs, and about the even broader range of USDA public services. Later, he chatted informally with some of the 300 youths hired in Washington this summer.



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**so it can be the first day
of somebody else's, too.**



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Ag 846
exp-2

Employee Newsletter
of the U.S. Department
of Agriculture

'USDA'

Volume 37
Number 18
August 30, 1978

Abroad(er) Accent

Secretary Bergland is giving greater stress to international agricultural development by establishing a new line agency. It is the Office of International Cooperation and Development (OICD). The agency will provide broader technical assistance and training, using USDA and other personnel, to help developing nations help themselves.

OICD will serve as liaison between USDA and international organizations, particularly the Agency for International Development. The agency will also coordinate scientific exchange agreements, and help develop programs providing food assistance to developing countries.

Formerly called the International Development Staff, the new agency will be headed by **Quentin West**, former administrator of the old Economic Research Service. It will consist of seven divisions: technical assistance, international training, development programs, scientific cooperation, interagency relations, program support, and international organizations affairs. In addition to serving as director of OICD, West will continue his duties as Special Assistant in the Secretary's office for International Scientific and Technical Cooperation.

The agency will report to **Dale E. Hathaway**, Assistant Secretary for International Affairs and Commodity Programs.

In establishing OICD, Secretary Bergland said, "President Carter has expressed a strong commitment to alleviating hunger and malnutrition throughout the world. I fully support that view.

"In order for USDA to support this objective, we need to effectively tap the wealth of human resources avail-

able in USDA, achieve closer collaboration with the land-grant universities, better integrate participation with international organizations, such as the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, and give greater emphasis to the increasing number of scientific exchanges with other countries."

The Secretary noted that "the United States can't feed the world because

and university specialists worked in 54 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. They offered technical assistance in such areas as agricultural planning, organization development, management, economics, statistics, marketing, credit, nutrition, education, research, extension, conservation, cooperatives, food technology, forestry, engineering, irrigation, livestock, and agronomy. The assign-



Providing assistance in New Delhi, India, plant pathologist F. J. Williams (right), formerly with USDA, examines mung bean plants with Indian scientist B. Baldev. The plants are an important source of protein to India. Stressing greater USDA assistance abroad, Secretary Bergland has established the Office of International Cooperation and Development.

we don't have the land or the resources. But we can help developing countries help themselves, and our policies will be designed to do that."

Spread all over the world, USDA experts provide essential agricultural experience to foreign governments, farm groups, and international organizations. During 1977, for example, more than 600 USDA

ments ranged from one week to several years.

Through international agricultural development, food production in less developed nations can be increased, income levels will rise, trade with the United States and other countries will expand, food supplies will become more secure, and economic and rural progress will be fostered both in developing and developed nations.

A Reduction In Deductions

With prices on the upswing, it's nice to know there is something that is cheaper.

The Civil Service Commission has announced a decrease in deductions for both regular and optional life insurance under the Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) Program. The changes become effective September 10, 1978.

According to the commission, the new biweekly deduction for regular and optional insurance coverage will be 25.5 cents per \$1,000, instead of the current 35.5 cents per \$1,000. Regular insurance, the commission noted, is determined by rounding off an employee's annual salary to the next higher \$1,000 and adding \$2,000. For example, CSC said, regular insurance for an employee with an annual salary of \$12,581 is \$15,000. Minimum coverage is \$10,000, and maximum coverage \$60,000.

Optional insurance, the commission explained, is an additional \$10,000 of coverage, regardless of annual salary. As with regular insurance, rates for optional coverage are based on an employee's age.

Dialing For Jobs

Looking for another job, but having difficulty finding one? Try "Dial-A-Vacancy," the space-age telephone system with a built-in recorder. It lets your fingers do the walking to available jobs.

Located in the Office of Personnel, the system features a two-minute recording of USDA jobs openings in the Washington, D.C., complex. The recording gives a quick rundown on full-time, part-time, and temporary positions, ranging in grade from GS-3 to GS-7. The listing includes such jobs as secretary-steno, clerk-typist, secretary-typist, clerk-steno, personnel clerk, and computer operator.

The new biweekly insurance rates are:

| AGE GROUP | OLD RATE | NEW RATE |
|-------------|----------|----------|
| Under 35 | \$.80 | \$.60 |
| 35-39 | 1.20 | 1.00 |
| 40-44 | 1.90 | 1.70 |
| 45-49 | 2.90 | 2.40 |
| 50-54 | 4.50 | 3.50 |
| 55-59 | 10.50 | 7.50 |
| 60 and over | 14.00 | 9.00 |

CSC said that employees who once declined regular or optional insurance can get it after a year provided they:

- are under age 50, and
- furnish satisfactory medical evidence on Standard Form 51

Both forms of insurance pay double indemnity for accidental death, and both also pay for accidental loss of hand, foot, or eyesight. However, double indemnity and dismemberment protection stop when an employee retires.

CSC explained that regular and optional insurance coverage continues after retirement if an employee retires for disability or after at least 12 years of creditable service. After

retirement, CSC said, regular insurance is free, but optional insurance must be paid for until age 65. Then it is free.

In retirements at age 65, CSC added, both regular and optional insurance coverage reduce by two percent until the policy is worth 25 percent of face value.

 *
 * **Thanks, We Needed That!** *
 * Secretary Bergland has paid *
 * Farmers Home Administration *
 * perhaps the highest compliment a *
 * boss can give. *
 *
 * Commenting on his travels *
 * throughout the country, the *
 * Secretary told FmHA employees *
 * that "wherever I've gone, I've seen *
 * Farmers Home people doing a *
 * superior job in difficult cir- *
 * cumstances. I was especially im- *
 * pressed by the performance of *
 * FmHA personnel during last *
 * year's natural disaster loan *
 * program." *
 *
 * The Secretary noted that last year *
 * FmHA processed a record *
 * number of emergency loans with *
 * virtually the same size staff as in *
 * the early 1970's. With 7,800 *
 * employees, FmHA processed over *
 * 1.2 million loans the past year, *
 * compared to 800,000 loans in *
 * 1971. *
 * *****

Coats Wears Two Hats

If you wear a wig, play a violin, or polish your shoes, you're using a product tested for purity by **William O. Coats**. A gentleman farmer, tobacco expert, and marketing specialist, Coats is responsible for testing "naval stores" for the Agricultural Marketing Service.

Used in numerous household products, naval stores are turpentine and rosins. They are called naval stores because they are produced from the southern pine tree which, dating back to colonial times, produced tar and pitch for use on wooden ships. The tar and pitch were used chiefly for caulking seams and tarring ropes on the wooden vessels. Since that time, all products from the tree have been termed naval stores.

As part of his work, Coats once a month dons a full-length white coat and enters his closet-size lab in Washington to test new batches of naval stores. Using a hydrometer, color chart and distillation process, he tests the products for purity, records and results, and determines if the products qualify to wear the USDA grade shield. Although the tests are not mandatory, Coats inspects the products for about 10 companies that regularly request the test procedures. If they are exporters, the companies find that foreign

buyers have greater trust in products that bear the shield.

To qualify for the shield, Coats said, the products must conform to certain legally defined standards. He added that during his inspection he grades rosins according to color, and makes sure there's no foreign matter in turpentine, such as sand, soil, or sawdust.

Naval stores are first examined by AMS field inspectors, and then sent in to Washington for re-examining. "If we (in Washington) find anything different during our inspection, we immediately report back to the field," Coats explained. So far, he added, there have been no discrepancies.

Coats said that historically the greatest use of turpentine was as a base for paints. Rosins have been used primarily for manufacturing soap and paper products. Recently, Coats noted, turpentine has been declining in favor of cheaper chemical compounds. But, he added, it will be around for a long time to come. You will find turpentine in a long list of products. A few examples: paint thinners; solvents for resins, lacquers, and varnishes; wood fillers

and wood stains; pharmaceutical items such as disinfectants, liniments, medicated soaps and salves; and fumigants.

Rosins, Coats pointed out, are still an essential ingredient in laundry soaps.

Although he's adept at it, inspecting naval stores is only a small part of Coats' regular duties. His chief job, as a tobacco expert, is in tobacco standardization work which at times involves inspecting and grading tobacco.

At tobacco warehouses, Coats inspects an average of 420,000 pounds of tobacco a day, working with two or three other inspectors. He examines tobacco trucked in by farmers and places an official grade on it according to USDA standards. The tobacco is graded according to color, quality, and the position on the plant at which the leaves grew.

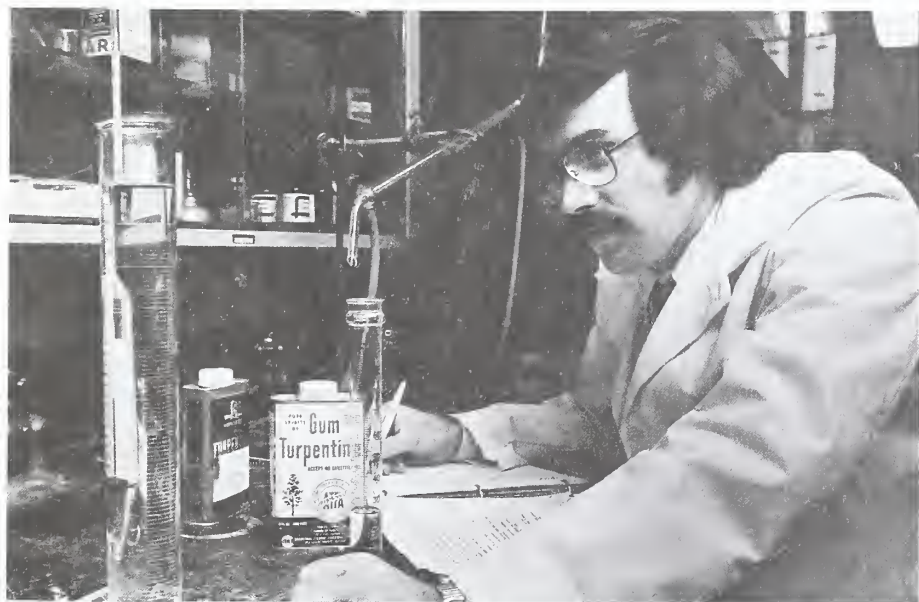
In addition to those duties, Coats also audits warehouses under the new AMS Grower Designation Program. The program regulates the amount of tobacco—and selling time—each warehouse is entitled to. The reason for that, says Coats, who travels about six months a year, is that "processing plants can handle only so many pounds of tobacco at a time. If there weren't some restrictions, marketing gluts would result, and a marketing holiday would be needed."

A native of Kentucky, Coats became familiar with tobacco while helping his family farm 500 acres near the town of Horse Cave, Ky.

Money-Saving Advice

Shopping for credit can often save money. Whether it's saving pennies or dollars, it pays to choose credit carefully.

To help consumers decide what type is best for them, USDA is distributing a yearbook reprint of "Shopping for Credit Can Save You Cash." For your free copy, send a postcard to the Consumer Information Center, Dept. 615F, Pueblo, Colo. 81009.



Bill Coats, tobacco expert and marketing specialist with AMS Tobacco Division, tests turpentine for purity in Washington lab. Testing turpentine presumably fell to AMS because southern pine trees and tobacco share the same growing area.

Cutting Down On T-I-M-B-E-R

USDA researchers in Madison, Wis., have come up with a unique product that could preserve national forests. They've developed a way to build wooden walls without using much wood.

In tests at the Forest Products Laboratory, the researchers have developed a flakeboard that makes greater use of forest resources, and saves on lumber. Looking like the sides of a giant corrugated box—with two flat surfaces and a wavy center—the flakeboard consists of nonmarketable wood (such as diseased or decayed trees) currently not being used. Mixed with a binding agent, the wood is processed into sheets of flakeboard for use as panels in home construction.

In tests at the FPL, **Robert L. Geimer** and **William F. Lehmann** demonstrated that the flakeboard can be used to build walls, roofs, and floors without having to use solid 2 x 4's. Using the product, researchers say, could benefit both consumers and forests by alleviating potential housing material shortages, while providing a new market for forest resources. The product could also be used to cut materials-handling costs in the production of modular homes.

At the products laboratory, tests are still being conducted on the flakeboard to see if it is feasible and strong enough for all intended uses. Tests are also being conducted to determine the flakeboard's durability under various loads, and to assess the economics of manufacturing and using the product on a large scale.

Harry Leslie, information officer for the FPL, explained that the Forest Service's National Flakeboard Program "is an effort to better use the nation's forests through wise use of the entire timber resource."

For their invention, the researchers have obtained a government patent that has been assigned to the people of the United States in the name of the Secretary of Agriculture.



Robert Geimer, researcher at the Forest Products Laboratory, stands in front of a prototype wall made almost solely of patented flakeboard. The piece in his hands shows the corrugated nature of the inner layer. Both sides of flakeboard can be covered with siding, paneling, or other finishing material.

Donations Break Record

Federal civilian and military employees contributed a record \$79.5 million to last fall's Combined Federal Campaign. The amount, raised in an on-the-job solicitation for voluntary charitable organizations, was an increase of 11.6 percent over contributions pledged in fall 1976. In addition, the Department of Defense raised another \$6.2 million in its Overseas Combined Federal Campaign.

Funds raised in these campaigns support local United Ways, National Health Agencies, International Service Agencies, and the American Red Cross.

The average gift in the campaign last year increased to \$28.79 from \$26.12 in 1976, while rate of participation

over the same period increased from 71.4 percent to 71.8 percent.

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Milton Sloane, Editor
Sharon Edwards, Editorial Assistant

Talking It Over With The Public

If you want to know what's on the public's mind, go ask them. That's what Forest Service leaders did recently, and it worked.

Taking time out from regular duties,

he said, "that many people form their opinion of the Forest Service and the quality of service we provide. Here also is where we have the opportunity to explain how reasonable our requirements are [for granting per-



Aided by receptionist Jan Simmons (second from left), Gary Cargill, Deputy Forester for the Southwest Region, takes a turn handling the information desk in Albuquerque, N. Mex. Cargill was the first of nine regional executives operating the desk to learn firsthand how the region can improve public services. Above, Cargill and Simmons help two office visitors seeking information about national forests.

the executives took turns manning the information desk of the Forest Service's southwestern region office in Albuquerque, N. Mex. Their purpose was to find out firsthand where public interests lie and the type of information the public is looking for. From their experience, the executives hope to improve the nature of services and the way they are delivered to the public.

In setting up the project, Deputy Regional Forester **Gary Cargill** noted that "the fifth floor information desk is one of the most demanding stations in the region. It is here,"

mits, for instance] and how consistently we manage the forests."

Continuing, Cargill said: "Although we have all done it before, each of us should renew the experience of meeting a few of the people we work for over the counter and over the phone. What better way," he concluded—referring to executive service at the desk—"to find out what people have to say about our activities and to discover opportunities for improving our service."

Cargill then led the way for others to follow. Teaming with receptionist

Jan Simmons, who regularly handles the information desk, Cargill fielded questions for two and a half hours from an information-seeking public.

"Is there drinking water on the Jemez Falls campgrounds?" one caller asked. "Are there any campfire or smoking restrictions on national forests?" another wanted to know. "Where can one go to cut firewood near Albuquerque?" "And where can one dig a small tree?"

Another caller wanted to know "are there pit toilets or flush toilets on the San Antonio campgrounds?"

But not all the callers want information. Some just want to offer comments. Twice while Cargill was working the desk, he recalled, citizens called to indicate there might be a more convenient way for the regional office to distribute local forest maps. The maps currently are distributed from a center in Albuquerque that apparently is inaccessible to a great number of people. At least it is to the callers.

To improve that service, Cargill said, "our office is in the process of opening another distribution center, and exploring the possibility of distributing the maps on an exchange basis in nearby national forests."

Although Cargill enjoyed the experience, operating the desk is a far cry from his normal duties. As Deputy Regional Forester, he is responsible for the management of renewable resources on national forests, and coordinating land management planning. He is also responsible for achieving the region's work goals.

Continued on next page.

Nutrition Experts Named

With the recent appointments of **Audrey Tittle Cross** and **D. Mark Hegsted**, Secretary Bergland reemphasized the Department's commitment to improving human nutrition.

Cross, a nutrition consultant from San Francisco, has been named to the new position of nutrition coordinator. In that capacity she will coordinate the Department's human nutrition activities, including activities in cooperation with other public and private agencies, professional groups, and international organizations. She will work closely with Assistant Secretaries **Carol Tucker Foreman** and **M. Rupert Cutler**.

Foreman and Cutler said that Cross' appointment is another indication of the Secretary's concern to improve human nutrition. Earlier, in April, Secretary Bergland formed the Human Nutrition Policy Committee to coordinate USDA's nutrition activities and to recommend appropriate nutrition policies and programs.

Before coming to USDA, Cross worked with the California

legislature on food stamp and child nutrition legislation, and participated in training aides in USDA's expanded nutrition education program. She also initiated a campaign to expand summer meal programs, and worked with state and local food stamp administrations.

Born on a farm near Turlock, Calif., Cross received her B.S. degree in dietetics, and master of public health degree in nutrition from the University of California at Berkeley. She has also done postgraduate work at Iowa State University, and earlier this year earned a law degree from the University of California at Hastings.

In a related appointment, Secretary Bergland named **D. Mark Hegsted**, one of the country's top nutritionists, as administrator of the Human Nutrition Center of the Science and Education Administration.

Hegsted will supervise USDA's in-house human nutrition research and coordinate its external research and extension programs in the human nutrition field.

Hegsted is a former professor of nutrition in the School of Public

Health, Harvard University, where he had been since 1942.

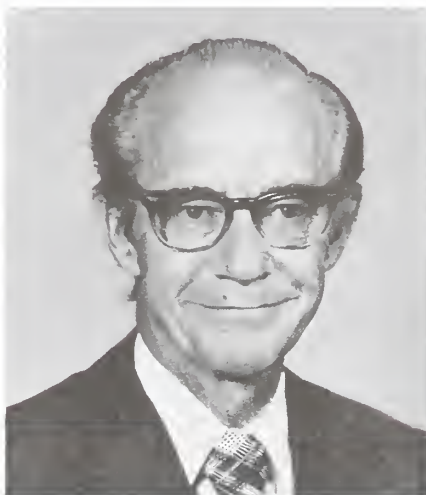
Born in Idaho, Hegsted has a B.S. degree from the University of Idaho, and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Wisconsin. He has served as president of the American Institute of Nutrition and of the National Nutrition Consortium. Hegsted is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, the American Institute of Biological Sciences, and the World Health Organization.

PEOPLE

Dr. Emilio Ciolfi, Food Safety and Quality Service, has been commended by President Carter for exceptional initiative and efforts toward improving government operations. A staff officer in Wash., D.C., with Meat and Poultry Inspection, Ciolfi was cited for improving the distribution and subscription systems for MPI publications which resulted in a savings of more than \$250,000. For his innovations, Ciolfi earned a USDA certificate and \$2,500. Ciolfi is a doctor of veterinary medicine and a member of several national veterinary associations.



Audrey Tittle Cross, a nutrition consultant with vast experience in food assistance programs, has been named by Secretary Bergland to coordinate the Department's human nutrition activities. A lawyer as well, Cross has worked with the California legislature and advised a Congressional subcommittee on nutrition legislation.



D. Mark Hegsted, an internationally recognized nutritionist, has been appointed to supervise USDA's nutrition research as administrator of SEA's Human Nutrition Center. Hegsted previously was professor of nutrition at Harvard University.

Continued from page 1.

Cargill said the idea for the rotating executive assignments "was not for the directors to become proficient receptionists, but to determine what public services we can provide that we may not be providing now."

In addition to Cargill, other regional executives taking turns at the desk include **Gearhart Nelson**, director for soil and water conservation; **Lynn Biddison**, director for fire and aviation management; **William Fallis**, range management director; **Robert Cook**, director for land management planning; **Jack Frost**, regional engineer; **Richard Harris**, director for lands and minerals; **John Koen**, director for recreation; **Mark Johannesen**, timber management director; and **William Zeedyk**, director for wildlife. □

Women Are Something Else!

Say goodbye to federal women's program coordinators. In a move designed to reflect the upgraded nature of their role, federal women's program coordinators at the headquarters level are now called program managers.

Marjory Hart, federal women's program manager for all of USDA, explained that the change was made because of a shift in focus. "The Civil Service Commission," she said, "now feels that the coordinators' role is more management-oriented than previously. Indeed, the focus has changed. Employees in the program no longer just coordinate the program; they really manage it."

"A secondary reason for the change by CSC is to allow employees the opportunity to receive credit for management experience that would enable them to move into other program areas. Previously, program coordinators could not receive such credit."

As part of the change, Hart continued, "all EEO specialists in government (including the Federal

Women's and Hispanic program managers) would be moved into a different occupational series. The employees would be moved from the 100—or social science—series into the 300 series (General Administrative, Clerical, and Office Services group)."

Although unofficially announced by CSC, Hart said, the changes apply to all federal departments as well as to agencies within those departments.

Hart explained that the role of federal women's program managers is to serve as advocates for improving the status of women in the areas of employment, promotion, training, and career development.

She also explained that, under the Federal Women's and other EEO programs, CSC now requires that agencies describe in an employee's official job description all EEO duties assigned to an employee on a collateral basis. EEO collateral assignments are defined as official EEO duties assigned to an employee *in addition to* his or her primary responsibilities.

The job description should explain the total nature of the EEO assign-

Top Lawyer Leaving

Sarah R. Weddington, USDA general counsel, is leaving to join the White House. She has been confirmed as a special assistant to President Carter. Weddington joins the White House staff after 15 months as USDA's top lawyer.

A USDA meat inspector worked an entire weekend recently just to donate the overtime pay to his favorite organizations.

Inspector Jack Sneed, of Jefferson City, Mo., helped slaughter 41 head of cattle at a processing plant in order to earn the money for the contribution. Sneed, a GS-9, donated the pay to the 4-H Foundation and the Future Farmers of America.

ment. This makes it possible to determine the correct series and grade level of work, describe the percent of the employee's worktime spent on the assignment, and show what official, other than the employee's immediate supervisor, provides technical guidance and will review the employee's EEO work.

Federal women's program managers for individual USDA agencies are:

| | | | | | |
|-------|------------------------------|------|------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| AMS | Evelyn Hutchins | FSQS | Cynthia Mercado | SEA/FR | *Barbara Aulenbach |
| APHIS | Gene Crawford | OALJ | Joyce Jordan | SEA/FR | *Jo Littrell (Alternate) |
| ASCS | *Hannah Klein | OEO | Marva N. Jett | SEA/TIS | *Marcella Giovannini |
| ESCS | Corinne LeBovit (Acting) | OEO | Regina Newman (Alternate) | SEA/CR | *Sandra Sturges |
| FAS | M. Gill Piquette | OIG | (Vacant) | SEA/CR | Lizzette Williams (Alternate) |
| FCIC | Anne Barnes | OGC | (Vacant) | SEA/ES | *Lois Blair |
| FGIS | (Vacant) | OGPA | Grace Krumwiede | SEC | Edwardene Rees |
| FNS | Barbara Baldwin (Acting) | OGSM | (Vacant) | USDA | Marjory F. Hart |
| FmHA | *Alice Oakley-Byrd | O&F | Margaret Caswell | USDA Graduate School | Leslie Bobrowsky |
| FS | *Christine Pytel (Acting) | REA | Diane Behrens | | |
| | | SCS | Eleanor Wilson | *Full-time | |

An All-Pro Secretary

If there is one secretary who knows the value of her work, it is **Lynne A. Buenz**.

A secretary with the Science and Education Administration in Berkeley, Calif., Buenz recently reached a notable height in her profession. She attained the rating of Certified Professional Secretary from the National Secretaries Association, a leading organization established to elevate secretarial standards.

Requirements for the rating include several years of specified secretarial experience plus passing a six-part written examination. The exam covers such areas as environmental relationships in business, business and public policy, economics and management, financial analysis and mathematics of business, communications in decisionmaking, and office procedures.

Out of 5,258 candidates applying for certification in 1978, Buenz was one of only 940 certified.

Health Benefits Open Season

Open season this year for health plans will run from November 13 through December 8. Employees who wish to enroll in a health plan or to change their present plan may do so at this time. Open season instructions, information on rates, and brochures on the government-wide plans will be distributed to all eligible employees.

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Milton Sloane, Editor
Sharon Edwards, Editorial Assistant

Buenz said it took three years to prepare for the tests—through a combination of study classes and college courses. “The first time I took the exam,” Buenz recalled, “I passed five parts, but found I needed some training in business law and accounting. So for three nights a week after work, I studied accounting and business law at Contra Costa Community College. One other night a week I took review classes sponsored by NSA. The past year was the hardest because of the heavy course load.”

Buenz said she doubts the rating “will do much for me in my present job, but it gives me a lot of self-satisfaction. Passing that exam was a goal I wanted to achieve more than anything else. Now I know I can achieve whatever I set out to do.”

Buenz added that as a result of the exam, “and getting into courses I



Through hard work and determination, Lynne Buenz has been rated a Certified Professional Secretary by the National Secretaries Association. Buenz achieved her goal after three years of study and passing a comprehensive six-part exam.

otherwise wouldn't have gone into,” she is considering continuing her education and preparing for a new career.

“Perhaps in personnel,” she said. □



Paul Wertz (right), for 11 years chief of USDA's printing operation, accepts a rare award during a retirement ceremony near Capitol Hill. Wertz received the Public Printer's Special Appreciation Award from the U.S. Government Printing Office. Only the second person outside GPO ever to receive the honor, Wertz was cited for his “extraordinary contribution to the federal printing program.” Wertz also received a \$1,000 cash award from the Office of Governmental and Public Affairs for directing USDA's large and complex printing procurement operation. Presenting the award from GPO is Public Printer John J. Boyle.

Here's To Good Health: A Look At The American Diet

America has the most productive food system in the world. Yet, many Americans are not eating as well as they could.

To increase the Department's ability to improve the national diet, Secretary Bergland recently appointed two leaders in the field of food and nutrition to high-level Department posts. They are **Audrey Tittle Cross**, a former nutrition consultant in California, and **Dr. D. Mark Hegsted**. Dr. Hegsted, until recently, was professor of nutrition at Harvard University.

Among her duties, Cross will coordinate nutrition programs both within USDA and between USDA and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. She also ensures that nutrition programs specified in the 1977 Farm Bill are implemented. Dr. Hegsted will direct the Human Nutrition Center, and oversee all nutrition research activities conducted within the Department.

USDA asked the experts about the growing interest in nutrition programs and research priorities:

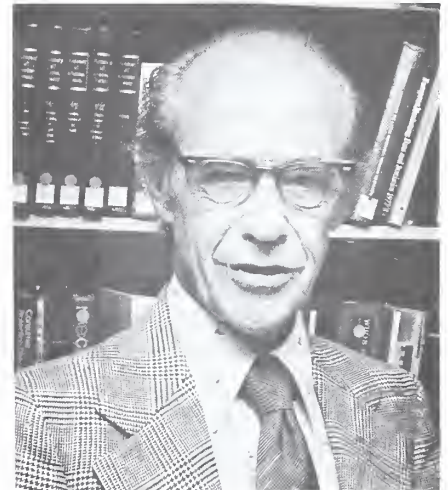
Why is there intense concern over human nutrition and the food we eat?

Cross: To answer that question, I think we have to look back to the civil rights movement when concern over the existence of hunger and malnutrition in this country began. From that awareness arose concern with the scarcity and inadequacy of distribution of our food supplies among certain populations. The scientific community responded by beginning



Audrey Cross, nutrition coordinator for USDA, expresses pleasure that under Secretary Bergland's leadership consumer issues are being addressed from the consumer's point of view.

investigations of the extent to which malnutrition existed. At that point, research interests in nutrition took a different focus than previously. Prior research had focused on nutrient requirements. The national interest in hunger began to focus research concerns on people and how they ate. In the process of looking at malnutrition over those ten years, our affluence as a nation increased and we began to discover not only problems of undernutrition, but also the problems of overnutrition. And that is where we are today. Nutrition scientists are not only looking at problems of food scarcity and inequitable distribution of food, but also are focusing on the role of nutrition in positive health and prevention of disease. Concurrent with the hunger movement was the establishment of Senator McGovern's Senate Nutrition Committee, which focused initially on the problems of malnutrition. The com-



Dr. D. Mark Hegsted, director of Human Nutrition Center, explains that the center's job will be to preserve the good characteristics of the American diet.

mittee was primarily responsible for sponsoring USDA programs such as food stamps and the child nutrition programs. The focus then shifted to problems of excess in food intakes, or wrong choices of foods. There is now a great deal of interest in funding research in the area of human nutrition regarding nutrient needs, food composition, food choices to meet nutrient needs, and dissemination of information to the American public. USDA was delegated the primary responsibility within government for these nutrition activities.

Why is there so much controversy in human nutrition?

Hegsted: I think it's not much different than the other areas of science, but it's an issue that the public is a lot more interested in. As most researchers know, science never

Continued next page.

proves anything; the scientific method mainly *disproves*. I think it's a sad fact that a lot of researchers never really want to deal with the decision-making process; they prefer to keep on trying to discover additional facts. But there comes a time when decisions have to be made, and to a considerable degree, they involve judgment. That will always be true. But I think you have to recognize that there are some big commercial interests involved in human nutrition—decisions that influence a great variety of people. I really don't think nutrition is in any more of a state of disagreement than most other sciences, but only that it's a more relevant topic.

Given the controversy about nutrition, how do consumers know who to believe?

Hegsted: It's too bad, in a way, that these nutrition arguments occur in front of the public, because usually the disagreement is not as great as it seems. But I think we have to accept the fact that in this society most of the decisions seem to be made by adversarial representation, and that as science becomes more mature, some of the disagreements will obviously disappear.

Cross: There is an equal amount of controversy in the medical profession about how to deal with the common cold, what the causes of cancer are, and so forth. The difference is that people don't get colds every day, and they don't get cancer every day. But they do eat every day and they do participate in market processes, even in the food-away-from-home context. They may not be going to the grocery store to purchase food to take home, but very likely one or several members of the family are making food selections in a cafeteria line, at school, at their business, or whatever. Consumers are concerned about what they eat. They are concerned about the increasing cost of food. They are paying more, and they are concerned about whether or not they are getting their dollar's worth—both in terms of nutrition and in terms of satisfying other needs connected with food. If people were as concerned about the common cold, I think there would be just as much controversy.

What's the biggest problem in human nutrition? Is it obesity, cholesterol, undernutrition?

Hegsted: That's a matter of judgment. Half of Americans have heart disease. About a quarter of them die of cancer. About 10 percent of adults have high blood pressure. It's estimated that five percent of Americans have diabetes, and if it keeps going, it will be 10 percent before very long. If that's the appropriate classification, then the risk factors of heart disease are our primary problems. But most people would rather have a heart attack than have cancer. If you look at the budgets of the cancer institute and the heart institute, you'll find that the cancer budget is higher primarily for that reason. So I would say that in the past, that's the way people have tried to evaluate the relative importance of nutrition when related to which disease. I would also say that I think there is some overemphasis on obesity. That is certainly a very prevalent problem, but the risk associated with modest degrees of obesity is not very great in adults. If you compare the data on obesity versus the data on levels of serum cholesterol, you'll find it much worse to have the high cholesterol level than to be a little overweight.

I'm hoping that one of the things we can look at through research is how to better help the consumer in the marketplace.

—Cross

What's the most significant problem in human nutrition?

Cross: I can only give you an opinion. One of the things I hope our nutrition center will focus on is the behavioral and sociological influences of human nutrition activity. I'm concerned that consumers are not making informed decisions in the marketplace. They don't have adequate knowledge of nutrition or of the nutrient value of foods. Food doesn't come as vitamin A or vitamin C. It comes, instead, as a tomato or an orange. The kinds of decisions consumers are making are based

solely on food items. Behavior in the marketplace is being influenced by information that isn't based on the best scientific knowledge. For example, companies that are legitimately trying to sponsor their products and to encourage consumer selection of those products are giving only their point of view. There's no counterview or additional information to tell consumers from what source they might get a particular nutrient and what combination of foods they need to eat to meet their nutrient needs. I'm hoping that one of the things we can look at through research is how to better help the consumer in the marketplace.

Hegsted: There's always been an assumption that the school lunch program ought to serve the dual purpose of feeding children and teaching them how to eat. Certainly there's been a lot of talk about that. With Congressional interest in nutrition education, it's obvious now that there will be much more emphasis in that area. But there are some pretty serious questions still unanswered. One is, do we really know how to influence behavior? Most of the assumption in the past has been that if you teach people the facts about nutrition, they will respond correctly. But we know that people keep smoking even though they know they shouldn't. Obviously they won't eat just for nutrition. It's easy to make a nutritionally adequate diet that nobody will eat. So there has to be some research in educational methods and behavioral modification.

What were the dietary goals you established for the U.S. Senate, and how can they be implemented?

Hegsted: The dietary goals you refer to were prepared and published by Senator McGovern's Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs. I was one of the consultants in the preparation of them. I've been accused of writing them, but that's not true. Those goals came out primarily because the relationship between nutrition and major health problems simply has not been dealt with very well. The goals have obviously made a lot of people pay attention to the issue. Briefly, the goals recommended that we:

- reduce total food intake to control obesity
- reduce fat intake, especially saturated fat
- reduce cholesterol intake
- reduce sugar intake
- reduce salt intake
- increase consumption of fruits, vegetables, grain products—especially whole grain products—and unsaturated oils.

Now, how they are going to be implemented, and what's going to happen to them is obviously not yet clear. Goals like those have to evolve over a period of time and can be expected to be modified with time and experience. It's largely a matter of educating the public and the food industries. We do need help from the industries that produce foods to make it easier for people to modify their intake of fat, cholesterol, salt, and sugar. And that is going to take a fairly long time. We hope and expect that over the years the dietary advice, the research, the opportunity in the marketplace will shift the dietary pattern of the American public.

Are vegetarians healthier than people who eat meat?

Hegsted: That, again, is an unanswered question. There simply isn't enough information available. I think we're certain that a completely vegetarian diet is a little more difficult for most people to manage. Actually, a lot of vegetarians are obviously diet-conscious and do pay attention to what they eat. So that even though there are some risks associated with vegetarianism, there's no reason to believe you can't be adequately nourished from those kinds of diets.

Are organic foods better than other foods?

Hegsted: No.

How effective are vitamin and mineral pills in supplying nutrients?

Hegsted: Depending on what nutrients they contain, they are as good as any other source of nutrients. If people want to take a vitamin pill every morning, and particularly if they think it improves their health, they ought to continue to do so. But the point should be made that they shouldn't rely on supplements of that kind for their diet. You can't get

everything you need out of a pill. It's much wiser to try to look at the total diet than to simply assume that if you take a few pills a day you're going to be adequately nourished.

Do you take vitamin pills?

Hegsted: No.

It's easy to make a nutritionally adequate diet that nobody will eat.

—Hegsted

What are the good things about the way Americans eat?

Hegsted: There are a lot of good things about the way Americans eat. If you compare the disease patterns of the 1930's, obviously you'll see that most people are better off and happier. Certainly it's much better to die of overnutrition than undernutrition. I don't think there's any doubt about that. Being hungry is worse than being fat. So there are a lot of good characteristics about the American diet, and our job is to preserve those characteristics and remove some of the limitations. Although there are many ways to criticize our diet, we are very fortunate people compared to most, and that ought to be emphasized.

Cross: I think we're reaching the point in science where we have the technological capacity to do things which we must first ask ourselves whether or not we should be doing. For example, just because we can make a grain-based, fortified product and distribute it easily is not necessarily justification for doing it. I would think that American farmers—particularly fruit and vegetable growers—who have products which may well go by the wayside would be especially opposed to the use of such technology. If we produce a processed grain product that is fortified with the vitamins and minerals that we have traditionally gotten from fresh fruits and vegetables, then we will decrease the national use of these commodities. These are areas of balance of interests that hopefully the Department will look at over the next few years as part of a national nutrition and farm policy.

Are food additives and preservatives hazardous to health?

Hegsted: That depends upon which food additive and which preservative. I judge the American diet to be as safe in terms of toxins and carcinogens as any available in the world. I think the area of additives and preservatives is one area where we have done a pretty good job. And it's certainly an area of active concern. Obviously, we should be conservative. We don't have an absolute capacity to measure how risky anything really is, so we ought to be conservative. The best policy is to limit those additives and preservatives to those foods where they are necessary or useful. But I think there's overconcern about additives and materials of that kind among the American public.

What would happen to meat if, or when, nitrates and nitrites are removed?

Hegsted: We can't answer that because it depends on what one can develop to replace them. I personally think there's overconcern about nitrates and nitrites as compared to other factors. On the other hand, I think they do present some risk and ought to be limited, and perhaps, eventually eliminated. But you have to remember that there are a lot of other sources of nitrates and nitrites around. Green, leafy vegetables, for example, are a fairly potent source of them. To assume that preserved meats are the only source is an obvious mistake. Everybody has to realize that everything we do is a risk—walking across the street, driving to work, or whatever, you might get killed. People ought not be so concerned about some of the things that present minor risks. But that doesn't mean that we shouldn't do whatever we can to reduce those risks.

Cross: The Food Safety and Quality Service is looking at the economic impact of removing nitrates from meats. They are looking at the impact on meat producers and processors, and the availability in the market of certain kinds of meat products that the American public is accustomed to consuming. One of the nice things that's happening under the Bergland administration is that, for the first time, consumer issues are being

addressed from the consumer's point of view. I think now there is far less potential for USDA to be criticized that it is only being influenced by producers and processors. There's a real rationality existing under this administration that didn't exist before.

Is it true that pan-frying meat can cause cancer?

Hegsted: What we know is that cooking meat by various ways—broiling, panfrying—does produce mutagens, and many mutagens are carcinogenic. They may contribute to cancer, but there certainly isn't any direct evidence that that is why we have a lot of cancer. I believe that when people talk about additives, carcinogens, and so forth, they should be aware that there are other sources as well that can produce the same risks. If they are going to be concerned about the issue, it would seem logical to be equally concerned about contaminants that enter in other ways.

Are most health problems diet-related?

Hegsted: There isn't any clear answer to that. Nutrition does play a part in many chronic diseases, but it's not *the* causative factor. Still, it is a factor. Genetics are very important, but can be modified by diet. So you would have to consider every disease individually. But the fact is that most *major* health problems of the American public are diet-related.

Cross: One of the reasons I think it's important that human nutrition research will be conducted by USDA is that research at HEW is conducted by physicians who still tend to be curative rather than prevention-oriented. I think that USDA can have a much more preventive focus that also integrates the role of food production and marketing. Hopefully, HEW will join us in doing some positive and preventive things in the whole health care system.

What's the best diet for losing weight?

Hegsted: That's undefined.

From a nutritional standpoint, which are better for people—fresh or frozen foods?

Hegsted: In most instances, there isn't any difference, and often the frozen will be better. That's because the industry has a better capacity to control the quality of their product than does the housewife or home-maker. When you go to the market to buy fresh vegetables, you don't know how long they've been there. I don't think it is a very big issue actually, but the fact is that some of the concern about processed foods is carried to extremes. Frozen foods are by and large about the same as they were when they were first taken off the farm because they are transported very fast and processed very fast under very controlled conditions. I think people should relax; that's one issue that's a non-issue.

Cross: The important thing is whether or not people continue to consume fresh fruits and vegetables or frozen fruits and vegetables year around. The freezing process certainly makes that available to us as a nutritional alternative. And that's what we need to see—much more fresh produce consumption. USDA household consumption surveys consistently indicate that fruits and vegetables are not getting enough attention in the American diet.

Should Americans eat more fiber?

Hegsted: Yes. The best advice is that Americans should eat more fiber. The trouble with that recommendation is that we don't really know quite yet what fiber is. We can't accurately measure the amount of fiber in foods. The popular books give you values that are erroneous. We do know that fiber occurs in whole grain cereals and most fruits and vegetables, but we don't have a good handle yet on the quantitative aspects of it. Yes, people should eat more cereals, fruits, and vegetables.

What, basically, will the Department's nutrition research involve?

Hegsted: An area that has been identified by several groups that have reviewed that question is that we need to know more about actual nutrient needs of various segments of our population. There's been quite a lot of work done on the vitamin, mineral, and protein needs of young adults, for example, but very little done on the nutrient needs of the

elderly. There also has been quite a bit of work done on infants, but almost no work done on adolescents. So everyone agrees, I think, that this area has to be expanded. We know much more about some nutrients than others and these gaps have to be filled if we are to be able to define an optimal diet.

What are the functions of the Human Nutrition Center?

Hegsted: We have the administrative and budget control of all the Department's nutrition research, and will advise other USDA agencies involved in nutrition activities. There's a lot of nutrition activity in Extension, for example. Something like half of their budget is related to nutrition research. Cooperative Research has a lot of nutrition research. So it is our responsibility to try to coordinate this research to prevent duplication, and to provide whatever assistance we can to activities relating to nutrition.

Will there be any shifting of USDA employees to form the nutrition center?

Hegsted: To some degree there will be, if we can find the right employees. At the moment, we don't know how large the center will be, although it probably won't be very big—particularly given the current budget. I would guess there will be six or seven nutrition scientists staffing the center, in addition to other appropriate personnel.

What's your favorite food?

Hegsted: I don't have a favorite food. I eat practically anything my wife prepares. If I didn't, I would get thrown out of the kitchen! But she does a good job and I certainly don't complain.

Do you cook your own meals?

Cross: Yes, I do.

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Milton Sloane, Editor

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A Revolutionary Idea

by Ovid Bay, SEA

Seventy-five years ago, in 1903, a Texas cotton farmer stood up in a crowded community meeting and volunteered 70 acres of land for a demonstration plot. He said he'd let the speaker use the plot to show area farmers how to increase farm income and combat the dreaded boll weevil—if the speaker would guarantee it wouldn't reduce the cotton farmer's income!

The farmer was **Walter C. Porter**. The speaker was **Seaman A. Knapp**, special agent with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. His mission was "to promote agriculture in the South." Local businessmen agreed to place \$450 in the bank to cover any

loss the Porter family might suffer, and the first application in Texas of the history-making "farm demonstration technique" was underway.

The Porter farm in Kaufman County was typical of the area. It had been planted to cotton and corn for 28 years without commercial fertilizer and without rotating any other crops.

Knapp was a college graduate with experience operating a farm in Iowa. As a researcher at Iowa State University he developed the idea that farmers would adopt new farming techniques if he could just "demonstrate results they could see

with their own eyes on their own farms." The 70-acre field on the Walter Porter farm was divided into plots to demonstrate use of more intensive tillage, commercial fertilizer and crop rotation.

Despite the boll weevil damage to cotton which in 1903 was the worst in 25 years, Knapp was able to produce good results on Porter's test plots:

Plot 1—produced 166 pounds per acre by planting and farming it the way Porter had always grown cotton.

Plot 2—produced 326 pounds per acre with intensive cultivation, application of 200 pounds of commercial fertilizer per acre and planting the cotton with 18 inches between the rows.

Plot 3—produced 414 pounds per acre, using the same cultivation and fertilization techniques as with plot 2; but the cotton was grown in a field which had been planted to nitrogen-producing cowpeas the year before. The nitrogen from the cowpeas gave the additional 88 pounds of cotton per acre.

Porter and his neighbors who watched the plots all summer were convinced by the demonstration. The check Porter received from the cotton gin that year contained \$700 more than he normally would have received, due to the additional production from his 70-acre volunteer plot.

From this beginning on the Porter farm, Knapp and his "farm demonstration work" spread faster than prairie fire across the plains of Texas. Private and local support provided funds for 33 "agents" to work with farmers in 1904 and 7,000 farmers planted "demonstration



If ever anyone could get things started, it's Pearl Bailey. Appearing at the Department with Secretary and Mrs. Bergland, Bailey helped kick off USDA's Combined Federal Campaign for this year in jam-packed Jefferson Auditorium. Several times receiving a standing ovation, Bailey recounted heartwarming experiences of services provided by CFC agencies and urged employees to give whatever they can.

Cont'd next page.

Test Your AG I.Q.

(see answers below)

(The following questions were adapted from a series of booklets pertaining to a USDA computerized exhibit. The exhibit is located in Chicago at the Museum of Science and Industry. For a free copy of the booklets, write the Office of Governmental and Public Affairs, Publications Division, USDA, Washington, D.C., 20250.)

1. Which of these do U.S. farmers grow the most of?
 - a. watermelons
 - b. apples
 - c. grapes
 - d. oranges
2. Who of the following get most of the money for a loaf of bread?
 - a. farmer
 - b. miller
 - c. baker
 - d. grocer
3. Which of the following has more vitamin C than oranges?
 - a. broccoli
 - b. dried beans
 - c. carrots
 - d. cheddar cheese
4. People spend the most money on—
 - a. food
 - b. clothing
 - c. shelter
 - d. transportation
5. The single most important nutrient in our diet is—
 - a. water
 - b. fat
 - c. vitamins
 - d. protein
6. Which of these foods does not count as a milk food?
 - a. cottage cheese
 - b. evaporated milk
 - c. butter
 - d. nonfat dry milk
7. Which of the following provides the most protein for the least cost?
 - a. peanut butter
 - b. bread
 - c. chicken
 - d. eggs

8. How much of the total U.S. workforce produces our food supply?
 - a. 2 percent
 - b. 4 percent
 - c. 17 percent
 - d. 22 percent
9. Which of these is not grown commercially in the United States?
 - a. coffee
 - b. rubber
 - c. flax
 - d. pineapples
10. A majority of the world's population lives—
 - a. mostly on meat
 - b. in three-story houses
 - c. in India
 - d. in less developed countries
11. Which of these items rose less than food prices between 1956 and 1976?
 - a. new cars
 - b. home ownership
 - c. newspapers
 - d. medical care
12. How many acres of U.S. cropland are there for each American?
 - a. less than one
 - b. about two
 - c. about five
 - d. about eleven
13. Which region in the United States harvests the most timber?
 - a. north
 - b. south
 - c. Rocky Mountains
 - d. Pacific coast
14. From which of the following products do farmers get the most cash income?
 - a. hogs
 - b. cattle and calves
 - c. corn
 - d. hay

Continued from page 1.

plots" on their farms so their neighbors could actually see the results of using new techniques in farming and in fighting the boll weevil.

The idea spread to other states, and on November 12, 1906 by coincidence, two men were both named "first" county agents. They were **W.C. Stallings**, of Smith County, Texas, and **Thomas Campbell**, of Macon County, Alabama.

Congress became interested in this new "demonstration technique for getting research information out to the people," and that led to the Smith-Lever Act of May 8, 1914, which established the Cooperative Extension Service, the voluntary system of education for youth and adults. As we know it today, this system has a staff of 16,000 professionals serving the public from approximately 3,150 county offices.

The 800-acre Porter farm is now operated by W.A. "Bill" and Harry, sons of Walter C. Porter, and Walter Porter's grandson, John Brooks.

Today, 75 years later, county agents **Wylie Roberts** and **Dawn Duncan** still visit the farm regularly to help out with agricultural and other problems the family might have. □

15. How many different kinds of soils are there in the United States?
 - a. 100
 - b. 1,000
 - c. 10,000
 - d. 100,000

Answers to AG I.Q.

1. d. oranges
2. c. baker
3. a. broccoli
4. c. shelter
5. a. water
6. c. butter
7. a. peanut butter
8. b. 4 percent
9. b. rubber
10. d. less developed countries
11. a. new cars
12. b. about two
13. b. south
14. b. cattle and calves
15. d. 100,000

The Chosen Two

For the next nine months or so, life is going to be radically different for **Kathleen F. Ellis** and **L. Kent Mays**. There'll be no more reporting on foreign disease outbreaks, as Ellis normally does with the Department, and no more working on the Resource Planning Act—as has been Mays' job. At least, not by those two.

From now until next fall, Ellis and Mays will be working instead on Capitol Hill with Congressional staffs. Ellis is an information specialist with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and Mays is a forester. They were chosen for their new assignments, after being chosen for the 1978-79 session of the Congressional Fellowship Program. They were selected by the Civil Service Commission, which jointly administers the program with the American Political Science Association (APSA).

Approximately 50 people, including non-federal employees, participate in the program each year. APSA selects the non-federal participants, while the Commission chooses the federal participants. To participate in the program, federal employees must be GS-13 or above, must be nominated by their agency, and must have top executive potential. While serving as Congressional Fellows, employees retain their employment status with their agencies.

During their training, the Fellows will receive an indepth knowledge of Congressional organization and operations, and develop skill in legislative procedures. Leading off the training session will be an intensive four-week orientation conducted by the APSA. Then in January, the participants will begin full-time assignments on Capitol Hill, working 4-1/2 months on the Senate side and 4-1/2 months on the House side. Throughout the Fellowship year, the participants will also attend weekly seminars with leading Congressional, governmental, and academic figures.

A USDA employee for five years, Ellis was among 11 other Congressional Fellows (and the first in USDA) to receive an additional two



One of two USDA employees selected as Congressional Fellows, Kathleen F. Ellis will spend the next nine months working with Members of Congress and with Congressional committees. Ellis is also the first USDA'er ever chosen to participate in the foreign affairs segment of the Fellowship program. USDA's other Fellow for 1978-79 is L. Kent Mays (below). A group leader with the Forest Service, Mays is involved with recreation planning on national forests and with the Resources Planning Act.



months of training in a foreign affairs segment of the program. The training includes two months of seminars and evening lectures on how international affairs affect the U.S. legislative process. The training is conducted at the Johns Hopkins School for Advanced International Studies by leading legislators.

Bubbling with excitement over her selection for the foreign affairs segment, Ellis said the training is

Searching For A Higher Paying Job

Looking for a GS-14 or 15 job?
Your search may soon be easier.

The Civil Service Commission has changed its procedures to provide better information about job openings at those grade levels.

Under the old system, applicants could either apply for a specific job (if they knew of it) or for general consideration for any vacancy at that level. It was difficult for job-seekers to find out about individual openings and make a specific application.

When an agency did notify CSC of a vacancy, there often were hundreds of people on CSC's register, many of whom were not interested in that particular vacancy. There was a great deal of paperwork in trying to identify the most qualified people who wanted that job.

Under the new procedures, when agencies notify CSC of GS-14 and 15 openings, CSC will post the information in Senior-Level Recruiting Bulletins at Job Information Centers across the country. The bulletins will specify the duties of the position, qualifications required, filing period, and how to apply. Applicants will apply for a specific position, and will no longer be able to apply for general consideration. Applications for openings at GS-13 and below will continue to be processed under the current procedures, since there are too many openings at those grade levels for the new procedures to be useful.

provided mainly to employees whose agency—such as APHIS—has an international focus. A world traveler, Ellis prepares information for APHIS on African swine fever, foot and mouth disease, and the screw-worm program.

Equally excited over his selection as a Congressional Fellow, Mays, a group leader with the recreation staff, said he looks forward after his Fellowship to working in the Forest Service's legislative affairs unit, and "hopefully to a field assignment after that." □

Indian Affairs Coordinator

Stuart Jamieson, a full-blooded Indian of the Seneca tribe of New York, has been appointed National Coordinator for Indian Affairs with the Farmers Home Administration.

A former supervisor of the Indian Desk, then located in the Office of Equal Opportunity, Jamieson coordinated all USDA programs regarding Native American activities. Early this year Secretary Bergland transferred responsibility for Indian Affairs from OEO to Farmers Home, because over half of the Indian population are located in rural areas. Many still remain on reservations.

In his new position, Jamieson will work closely with **Alex Mercure**, assistant secretary for rural development and chairman of the Native American Task Force in USDA. Before joining USDA, Jamieson was a director of the National Congress of American Indians.

Back On Board

J.B. Penn, a senior staff economist on the President's Council of Economic Advisors, has come back home. He has rejoined USDA as deputy administrator of the Economics, Statistics, and Cooperatives Service. He will direct the economic research and analysis functions of ESCS in his new position.

Penn joined USDA in 1967 as a researcher at Louisiana State University. He then moved on to Purdue University where he worked on production economics research. In 1974 Penn was transferred to Raleigh, N.C., to conduct research on structural changes in farming.

Penn moved to Washington in 1975 as a program leader for policy analysis. During his Washington tenure, Penn was instrumental in developing a research program which helped shape the Food and Agricultural Act of 1977.

A native of Arkansas, Penn received a B.S. degree from Arkansas State University and an M.S. degree from LSU. While working at Purdue, Penn received a Ph.D. degree in agricultural economics.



Stuart Jamieson, member of Seneca Indian tribe, is National Coordinator for Indian Affairs of FmHA. Jamieson was former supervisor of Indian Desk of OEO.



J.B. Penn, former senior staff economist on President's Council of Economic Advisors, is new deputy administrator of ESCS. Before serving with the Council, Penn was a field employee with the former Economic Research Service.

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Milton Sloane, Editor
Sharon Edwards, Editorial Assistant

PEOPLE

Two corporate executives will spend the next year working in USDA getting an indepth knowledge of specific programs. They will be working under the President's Executive Interchange Program.

They are **Kip Skavinski**, a corporate planner for Allegheny (Pa.) Ludlum Industries, and **Robert Scholle**, assistant vice president of the American Express International Banking Corporation of New York. The two are among a small group of executives chosen to participate in the Interchange Program, which is designed to improve relations between the private and public sectors.

Both will serve as special assistants. Scholle will serve as special assistant in overseas market development and finance to Foreign Agricultural Service Administrator **Thomas Hughes**. Skavinski will assist Office of General Sales Manager **Kelly Harrison**. Skavinski will also work with a group developing strategic marketing plans to help increase U.S. agricultural exports.

Theresa C. Rowe, a statistical assistant in the Kentucky State Statistical Office, has been named a Trustees' Scholar for the 1978-79 school year at the University of Louisville. Rowe, a participant in USDA's Upward Mobility Program with the Economics, Statistics and Cooperatives Service, will receive a full year's tuition as a result of the award. The scholarship is one of a limited number awarded by the university each year to persons who have achieved the highest academic standing among their peers.

Norris R. Caryl, of Morgantown, W.Va., and **Fred Norstadt**, of Ft. Collins, Colo., have been named Fellows of the Soil Conservation Society of America. Both were honored for their many years of service in soil and water conservation research. An assistant state conservationist, Caryl is employed by the Soil Conservation Service, while Norstadt is a soil scientist with the Science and Education Administration.

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Employee Newsletter
of the U.S. Department
of Agriculture

DC BRANCH

'USDA'

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October 25, 1978

Civil Service Reform Becomes Law

The federal civil service system is undergoing the first major change in its 95-year history. President Carter has signed into law the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978. Affecting every federal employee, the Act is designed to improve government efficiency, while protecting the rights of employees and management.

Carter. With a few exceptions, provisions of the bill take effect in January 1979.

The Civil Service Reform Act complements the Administration's Reorganization Plan, which abolishes the Civil Service Commission and replaces it with two new agencies. The agencies are the Merit

employees get a fair hearing on their grievances.

In any case of wrong-doing which comes under its jurisdiction, the board may impose disciplinary action resulting in removal, reduction in grade, exclusion from federal employment for up to five years, suspension, reprimand, or a civil penalty up to \$1,000. The board also is assigned a special counsel to investigate charges of illegal personnel practices (including reprisals against whistleblowers). The counsel has the power to subpoena witnesses, and bring charges against employees engaged in unlawful activities.

The reform measure provides new incentives for increasing productivity. It reduces red tape. It creates a bonus system for senior executives, and establishes merit pay for mid-level supervisors. The law also establishes a list of merit principles governing the federal workforce. The principles require, for example, equal pay for equal work and high standards of conduct, and concern for the public interest.

The law further prohibits illegal personnel practices and provides authority for disciplining offenders. The law also strengthens procedures for employee-management relations. It spells out specifically the areas opened and closed to collective bargaining. It allows employees to organize, and to negotiate with management on such adverse actions as dismissals, demotions, and long-term suspensions. Bargaining is prohibited, however, on restricted political activities, retirement, life and health insurance, suspension or removal for reasons of national security, examination, certification or appointment, position classification which does not result in grade or pay loss, and on any other matter the union and agency agree to exclude.

Continued on next page



Surrounded by Members of Congress and other dignitaries, President Carter signs the Civil Service Reform Act into law. The law is designed to improve government efficiency, and to strengthen protections against abuse of the civil service system. Representing Secretary Bergland at the White House ceremony was Personnel Director Sy Pranger.

The Act simplifies the process for hiring, firing, rewarding, and disciplining employees and guards against abuse of the system. It limits veterans' preference, revises the merit code, and broadens the bargaining process for labor and management. It also provides protection for "whistle-blowers," establishes a minority recruitment program, and creates a new pay system for mid-level managers.

To bring employees up to date on this key legislation, USDA is presenting a summary of the Act as revised by the Congress and signed by President

Systems Protection Board and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

OPM will be the primary agency for helping the President carry out responsibilities for managing the federal workforce. OPM will develop personnel policies and provide leadership for agencies in putting them into effect. OPM may also delegate to agencies functions formerly restricted to the Civil Service Commission.

The Merit Systems Protection Board, meanwhile, will ensure there are no abuses of the system, and that

The law additionally abolishes the existing employee performance rating system, and requires agencies to launch recruitment drives to eliminate underrepresentation of minorities within certain job categories. Responsibility for determining the extent of minority underrepresentation rests with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. EEOC will also establish guidelines for minority recruitment.

Overwhelmingly passed by both Houses of Congress, the reform law is divided into nine titles. Eight deal with substantive issues and the ninth with administrative matters. The eight are: Title I, Merit Principles; Title II, Civil Service Functions, Performance Appraisals, Adverse Actions; Title III, Staffing; Title IV, Senior Executive Service; Title V, Merit Pay and Cash Awards; Title VI, Research and Demonstration Authority; Title VII, Labor-Management Relations; and Title VIII, Grade and Pay Retention.

Title I, Merit Principles

Title I establishes nine principles to govern the federal workforce. In addition, it defines prohibited personnel practices and makes clear that disciplinary action will be taken against offenders. The nine principles require agencies to:

1. recruit from all segments of society, and select and promote on the basis of ability, knowledge, and skills, under fair and open competition.
2. provide fair and equitable treatment in all personnel management matters, without regard to politics, race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, age, or handicap, and with proper regard for individual privacy and constitutional rights.
3. provide equal pay for equal work, considering both national and local rates paid by private employers, with incentives and recognition for excellent performance.
4. promote high standards of integrity, conduct, and concern for the public interest.
5. make efficient and effective use of the federal workforce.
6. retain employees who perform well, correct the performance of those whose work is inadequate, and separate those who cannot or will not meet required standards.

7. improve performance through effective education and training.

8. protect employees from arbitrary action, personal favoritism, or political coercion.

9. protect employees against reprisal for lawful disclosures of information.

The law holds agency heads and their assistants responsible for carrying out all personnel laws, rules and regulations, and for insuring that violations of prohibited practices do not occur. Prohibited practices include illegal discrimination, considerations other than merit factors, use of an office for political purposes, deception or obstruction in personnel matters, use of undue influence, preferential treatment, nepotism, retaliation, and violation of any policy directly related to merit system principles.

Title I also states that the merit principles and prohibited personnel practices are in no way to be construed as a lessening of the effort to achieve equal employment opportunity through affirmative action.

Title II, Civil Service Functions, Performance Appraisals, Adverse Actions

Title II places into law new guidelines for rating employees' performance, handling disciplinary and adverse actions, and managing employee appeals. It permits the Office of Personnel Management to delegate personnel functions to agencies, including the right to conduct specific competitive examinations. It also gives the Merit Systems Protection Board, and its special counsel, the power to subpoena testimony and evidence needed to decide appeals or to conduct investigations.

Under Title II, the board may, as noted impose disciplinary actions resulting in removal, reduction in grade, exclusion from federal employment for up to five years, suspension, reprimand, or a civil penalty of up to \$1,000. The board may also order withholding of an employee's pay for failure to comply with the board's orders, and may award back pay and attorney fees as appropriate.

For the purpose of protecting whistleblowers, Title II defines protected disclosures as any information an employee believes shows mis-

management, a gross waste of public funds, abuse of authority, a violation of any law, or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety.

Title II eliminates the present employee performance appraisal system which uses adjective ratings of "outstanding," "satisfactory," and "unsatisfactory." Agencies are now required to develop a new rating system which will provide periodic appraisals of job performance and will encourage employee participation in establishing performance standards. The ratings will be used as a basis for developing, rewarding, assigning, demoting, promoting, retaining, or firing employees (for other than misconduct).

The law requires that agencies explain to each employee—no later than October 1, 1981—the performance standards and critical elements of their position.

The law also contains a new procedure for dismissing employees whose performance is unacceptable. Any employee recommended for demotion or dismissal because of unacceptable performance is entitled to—

—a written notice, at least 30 days before the proposed action, which identifies the unacceptable performance and the level that is expected.

—an opportunity during the notice period to demonstrate acceptable performance.

—the right to be represented by counsel.

—an opportunity to reply orally and in writing.

—a written decision, reflecting the concurrence of an official higher than the one who proposed the action, that the employee has not demonstrated acceptable performance.

—an agency decision within 30 days after expiration of the notice period.

An employee fired or demoted for poor performance may appeal the decision to the Merit Systems Protection Board. Whenever a decision is appealed, the burden of proof rests with the agency. The board has the power to require agencies whose decisions are reversed to pay an employee's attorney fees.

Title II also allows employees to appeal to the board in cases of adverse actions. Adverse actions include dismissal, a suspension for more than 14 days, reduction in grade or pay, and furloughs for 30 days or less. Complaints based on discrimination will go to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Under the new law, a reduction in rank is no longer considered an appealable adverse action. Thus, a change in title or duties not involving a reduction in grade or pay is no longer subject to appeal. Employees wishing to challenge board decisions or orders would generally file their claim with the U.S. Court of Appeals, or, in matters of pay, with the Court of Claims.

Title III, Staffing

Title III provides a number of employment features. It repeals the restriction against employing more than two members of the same family in government, and permits agencies to accept unpaid student services in connection with educational programs. It also authorizes employment of interpreters for deaf employees and reading assistants for blind employees.

To reduce the effects of reductions-in-force, Title III permits employees who meet the minimum age and service requirements to retire before they are affected by a major reorganization or transfer of function. It also authorizes agencies to train employees, who would otherwise be separated by a RIF, for placement in other agencies.

Beginning October 1, 1980, Title III eliminates veterans' preference for nondisabled military retirees at or above the rank of major or lieutenant commander. Additional benefits are provided for veterans with 30 percent disability or more, including non-competitive appointment to jobs, and preference over other veterans in a RIF.

Title III also limits the total yearly income of federally employed military retirees ("double dippers"). The combined federal salary and retirement pay (excluding certain benefits administered by the Veterans Administration) of a military retiree may not exceed the pay for Executive Level V (now

\$47,500). When it does, the retirement pay will be reduced. This provision, however, applies only to veterans who began receiving retirement pay after the law was enacted.

Title III further requires agencies to conduct a minority recruitment program, with assistance from the Office of Personnel Management, and limits the total Executive Branch workforce to the number of employees on September 30, 1977. The President is authorized to raise the number based on an increase in the U.S. population. The President may allow up to 60,000 employees in special employment categories for students and disadvantaged youths. The law forbids an increase in contracting out because of the limitation.

Title IV, Senior Executive Service

Title IV creates a Senior Executive Service of about 8,000 managers and supervisors in grade GS-16 through Executive Level IV. Employees entering the SES must have five years of current continuous service, although 30 percent of the positions may be filled with individuals with less service.

The Senior Executive Service is scheduled to go into effect July 13, 1979. Under the law, Congress may disband the SES after five years by passing a concurrent resolution.

Within the SES, there will be two types of *positions* and four types of *appointments*. The positions are career-reserved, which may be filled only by career employees, and general—which may be filled by career or non-career employees.

The four types of appointments are:

- career, in which selection is by the merit staffing process.

- non-career, in which selection is not made by the merit staffing process. No more than 10 percent of SES positions in the entire government, nor more than 25 percent in any agency, may be non-career (except in those agencies which already had a larger percentage).

- limited term, which is a non-renewable appointment for up to three years in a position which will expire.

- limited emergency, which is a non-renewable appointment for up to 18 months in a new SES position which must be filled on an urgent basis.

Qualification standards for particular SES positions will be established by the agency in which the job exists.

For career appointments to the SES, agencies will recruit and evaluate candidates using executive resource boards, and the Office of Personnel Management will evaluate candidates' qualifications.

For non-career, limited term, and limited emergency appointments—agencies will determine candidates' qualifications. Agencies will also designate the positions to go into the SES to initially staff the executive corps. Employees in designated positions will have 90 days to elect to go into the SES or remain in their present positions. If they remain in their current jobs, the employees will retain their pay and benefits, but will not be eligible for promotion or transfer except to a non-SES position. Converted employees do not have to have their managerial qualifications approved by OPM or serve a probationary period. Veterans preference is not applicable for the Senior Executive Service.

Title IV states that executives may be reassigned to an SES position in the same agency, but only upon 15 days' advance notice. It also states that executives may elect to transfer to another agency which wishes to employ them, but may not be transferred involuntarily. Within the SES there will be five levels of basic pay, ranging from GS-16 to Executive Level IV. Agency heads will set the salary of each executive at one of the five levels.

Career executives may receive performance awards, which could amount to as much as 20 percent of basic pay. In addition, each year five percent of career executives may be designated Meritorious Executives and receive a lump-sum bonus of \$10,000. One percent of the executives may be designated as Distinguished Executives each year and receive a lump-sum bonus of \$20,000. The total, however, (for salary, performance awards, and bonus) may not exceed the salary rate for Executive Level I (now \$66,000 a year).

To evaluate executives, agencies will develop performance appraisal systems for rating executives according to such factors as improvement of efficiency, productivity, quality of

work, reduction of paperwork, cost efficiency, and meeting affirmative action goals. Boards established to review the performance of career executives will contain a majority of members who are themselves career executives.

A fully successful rating qualifies the executive for a performance award; a less than fully successful rating can be the basis for removal from the SES.

If removed for poor performance during the probationary year, an executive may be placed in a non-SES position if originally appointed from within government.

Title V, Merit Pay and Cash Awards

Title V eliminates within-grade increases for GS 13-15 managers and supervisors, and pegs their pay increases to performance rather than to length of service. Those who excel as managers may receive annual merit pay awards of up to 12 percent of their salary. The law affects about 72,000 managers in grades GS 13-15, but not an additional 100,000 non-managers in those same agencies.

According to the new law, mid-level supervisors and managers will be granted at least half of each annual comparability pay raise (given to workers in October). The remainder of the comparability pay raise will be pooled, along with the money that would have been spent on "step" increases to dispense to managers in the form of merit bonuses.

The granting of the bonuses, or pay increases, will be awarded on the basis of individual and organizational accomplishments, such as improvements in efficiency, productivity, and quality of service. The merit pay system must be placed in effect by October 1, 1981, but may be phased in earlier.

Title V also states that agency heads and the President may give cash awards for suggestions, inventions, superior accomplishments, special acts, improvement of government operations, reduction of paperwork, or service in the public interest. The limit for each agency award is \$10,000, but OPM may approve awards up to \$25,000.

Title VI, Research and Demonstration Authority

Title VI of the reform program gives

broad authority to the Office of Personnel Management to conduct and support research directly related to improving management, and to carry out demonstration projects to test new approaches to personnel management.

The law allows up to 10 projects at a time and requires the completion of each in five years. Each project may not involve more than 5,000 employees.

Prior to conducting the projects, OPM is required to consult or negotiate with unions or with employees. Employees and Congress must be notified of each proposed project at least six months prior to implementation.

Title VI also authorizes federal agencies to require state and local governments to have merit personnel systems for positions engaged in carrying out federal assistance programs.

Title VII, Labor- Management Relations

Title VII casts into law provisions of the federal labor relations program, which has operated under Executive Orders since 1962. The law permits, for the first time, negotiations to be held on such adverse actions as discharge, demotion, and long-term suspensions. It establishes a Federal Labor Relations Authority which assumes labor-management functions from other federal agencies, and administers the government's labor-management disputes. The agency has a general counsel who investigates alleged unfair labor practices and prosecutes complaints before the Authority. The agency is to be operational by the end of this year.

The reform act clarifies "management rights," reserving to agency officials authority to make decisions and take actions which are not subject to collective bargaining. It prohibits bargaining on federal pay, for example, and on budget and organization. Bargaining is also prohibited on management's right to hire, assign, direct, lay off, and retain employees as well as suspend, remove, reduce in grade or pay, or take other disciplinary action. Bargaining is further prohibited on management's right to assign work, make determinations with respect to

contracting out, determine personnel by which operations shall be conducted, and to take necessary actions in an emergency.

Title VII upholds the basic rights of federal employees to form, join, and assist labor organizations or to refrain from these activities. It also continues the prohibitions against strikes and slowdowns, as well as picketing, which interfere with government operations.

Title VII contains a number of other features to simplify the handling of labor-management disputes, and to expand the due process rights of employees. These include:

- a speedy method to determine whether a particular matter comes under the scope of bargaining.
- paid time for employees representing a union in negotiations during regular working hours.
- withholding of dues—based on voluntary allotment by employees—at the exclusive union's request.

Title VIII, Grade and Pay Retention

Title VIII enables employees, for the first time, to keep their pay and grade if placed in a lower grade job. If, as the result of a reduction-in-force, or of a job reclassification, an employee is downgraded, the employee may retain the pay and grade of the former position for two years.

In a RIF, the employee must have been in the higher grade for at least one year. In a reclassification, the position must have been classified at the higher grade, also for at least a year.

At the end of two years, the employee may then be placed in the lower grade. Pay will be set at an appropriate rate until the employee equals or exceeds the previous salary.

The grade and pay retention provisions are retroactive to January 1, 1977.

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Milton Sloane, Editor
Sharon Edwards, Editorial Assistant

The Man Up Front

story by Joan Halm

Bernard Nathaniel "Tommy" Thompson has enjoyed a ringside seat to history.

During his 40 years of government service, he has met the great and the famous—first as a soldier doing duty at the White House, and most recently as chauffeur to Agriculture Secretary Bob Bergland, where he meets and greets presidents, diplomats, congressmen and kings.

On September 29 Thompson left after 18 years as chauffeur to five Secretaries of Agriculture.

It's a job he'll miss. "This is the best job that one can have in the federal government. You meet everyone from the President of the United States down to the messenger," he says.

Thompson smiles frequently and looks younger than his 59 years, although his closely cropped hair shows signs of greying.

"That's what Tommy's all about," says Thompson of himself as he motions towards the "Code of Ethics for Government Service" which hangs on a wall of his office. "My greatest hope is that everyone in the federal government, from the janitor to the Secretary of Agriculture, follows these goals," says Thompson. The code lauds hard work, denial of special favors and loyalty to government, law, and the Constitution.

As he speaks, Thompson sits or stands very straight, almost as if he were "at attention"—a habit never lost from his army days.

Born in Crozet, Va., Thompson at 19 joined F Troop of the 10th Cavalry Regiment. It was there he got the nickname "Tommy" that stuck.

While assigned to White House protection duty in 1942, he attended the White House lawn parties for servicemen and met both the Roosevelts. He has been a D.C. resident ever since those days.



(photo by Berny Krug)

Leaving government after 40 years, Bernard N. "Tommy" Thompson (right) is congratulated by Secretary Bergland, the fifth Agriculture Secretary for whom he worked as chauffeur. Thompson is now working with his son, Jose, on a private business venture—Tommy's Limousine Service.

Thompson eventually rose to the rank of sergeant. In 1948 he received a medical discharge following a back injury caused by a fall from a horse.

That year he joined the newly established Federal Cataloging System, a procedure for indexing all supplies owned by the Department of Defense.

As a supply cataloger, Thompson described and assigned an 11-digit federal item identification number to everything "from a hairpin, to whiskey, to food."

He spent 12 happy years at the post until the agency moved to Battle Creek, Mich. He toyed with joining

them, but his family wouldn't forsake their hometown.

"We had a vote and I was outvoted," says Thompson with a laugh. Thompson's family includes his wife, Manuela, and four offspring: sons Jose, Bernardo, and Manuel, and daughter Margarita.

So he looked for a new job, hoping for a government position. He heard about a chauffeur vacancy with the Department of Agriculture, and submitted his application.

"Orville Freeman (Secretary of Agriculture, 1961-69) took one look at it and hired me," says Thompson.

(cont'd on next page)

Investigation Unit Created

Honesty has always been the best policy. Today it applies even more.

At a White House ceremony, President Carter recently signed into law a bill creating an Office of Inspector General in 12 federal agencies. The bill consolidates existing audit and investigation activities under the direction of a single Presidential appointee. The inspectors general that the President appoints will be responsible for searching out fraud, waste, abuse, and inefficiency in government programs.

Accountable directly to their agency heads, the inspectors general will have complete freedom to initiate and conduct any audit or investigation. The IG's will be required to report all possible criminal violations to the Attorney General. They will also be responsible for keeping Congress informed—as well as their agency heads—of deficiencies in program operations and of any need for corrective action.

In signing the bill President Carter announced that he is requesting a

supplemental \$1.7 million for 1979 to provide 100 additional investigators and inspectors in the Office of the Inspector General of the General Services Administration.

“Over the long term,” President Carter said, “this legislation will be of great value in improving economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and integrity in the administration of federal programs.”

In addition to the Department of Agriculture, other federal agencies in which IG's have been established are: Departments of Commerce, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, Labor, and Transportation, General Services Administration, Environmental Protection Agency, Community Services Administration, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Small Business Administration, and Veterans Administration.



President Carter commends Congressman Jack Brooks for help in developing a bill creating offices of inspector general in 12 major agencies. The occasion was the signing of the bill. Others in photo are inspectors general from the affected agencies. USDA's inspector general, Thomas F. McBride, is second from left.

PEOPLE

Isiah Leggett, assistant dean and professor at Howard University's School of Law, has been selected as a White House Fellow to USDA. He is assigned to Assistant Secretary "Bobby" Smith's office, where he will study market regulatory programs and search for new procedures to speed processing of regulatory complaints. Born in Texas and reared in Louisiana, Leggett, 33, has a B.A. degree from Southern University, an M.A. degree from Howard, and a Master of Laws degree from George Washington University. He is a former legislative aid for Congressman Parren J. Mitchell.

(cont'd from page 1)

Since then he has chauffeured for four more Agriculture Secretaries including **Clifford Hardin**, **Earl Butz**, **John Knebel**, and last, for **Bob Bergland**.

"I feel that I am a companion rather than a chauffeur," says Thompson, who is but a beep away from duty 24 hours a day via his ever-present "bell-boy."

In addition to driving duties, Thompson also greets and directs visitors to Secretary Bergland's second floor Administration Building office.

While driving he is responsible for the personal comfort of the Secretary. He also juggles phone duty with driving the Secretary's brown 1978 Mercury Cougar.

Although a window partition separates the front and back of the car, Thompson says it never goes up. As with all his Agriculture Department bosses, Thompson says, "We're the best of friends—regardless of whether he's a Republican or a Democrat."

Thompson uses proper address—Mr. Secretary—when talking to

Secretary Bergland, but to others he fondly refers to him as "the old man."

Thompson will continue working. With his son, Jose, he is planning a private business venture—Tommy's Limousine Service. He'll also spend more time enjoying golf, horseback riding, and bicycling.

But Thompson adds, "My heart will always be with our government."

The thing he'll miss the most? "Not being where the action is," he says with a smile.

Big Opportunity for Little Farmers

Over 400 small farmers from all over the country had a chance to sound off directly to Secretary Bergland and other Department officials last summer. The encounters took place at five regional conferences sponsored jointly by USDA, ACTION, and the Community Services Administration. The conferences included farmers from all 50 states, chosen to carry the message of fellow small farmers in their respective communities. The farmers were selected by special state committees, which consisted of members of rural development groups and community service agencies. Each state sent eight farmers or their spouses.

For most of two days of the conferences, the delegates vividly portrayed the small farmer's plight, identified the key problem areas, and proposed solutions. Problems centered mostly on such areas as capital and credit, production, marketing, land use, and farm family living. In the area of capital and credit, the farmers urged USDA to simplify the paperwork required for loans and cost-sharing programs, and to adjust the interest rates, loan ceilings, and security requirements for small farm operators.

They also urged the Department to gear cost-sharing programs more to small farmers because small farmers lack the operating capacity to absorb higher production costs.

On the problem of marketing, the farmers pointed out that small farmers need more assistance in organizing cooperatives because they cannot get fair prices for growing produce, and don't have adequate storage facilities.

The farmers also pointed out that prime agricultural land must be protected from urban sprawl, highways, and other nonagricultural uses. The farmers further indicated that corporate and foreign investment in U.S. agricultural land is driving up land prices for small farmers. They emphasized that young farmers need more educational opportunities, and that farm families should have better access to health insurance.

In response to the problems, Secretary Bergland has asked USDA agencies to re-examine their program policies to see where changes can be made to meet the special needs of small farmers. He has also directed agencies to avoid all actions that reduce land available for food and fiber production.

As a result, the Farmers Home Administration is redirecting funds to its low-income loan program, and will attempt to alleviate some small farmers' financial burdens under the Agricultural Credit Act of 1978. Meanwhile, the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service plans to increase the budget for activities benefiting small landowners under the Agricultural Conservation Program. ASCS hopes to help small farmers improve their

Gone to OMB

USDA's award-winning FAPRS program was so good it doesn't exist any more. Under a new law, the system has been transferred to the President's Office of Management and Budget.

The transfer was made under the Federal Program Information Act which requires OMB to make available to the public information regarding federal assistance. OMB chose to use USDA's system rather than develop its own.

A one-stop computer information system, FAPRS (the Federal Assistance Program Retrieval System) helps local officials locate funds for community development projects. Within minutes, the system can scan a memory bank of more than 600 federal programs and print out those for which a community can qualify for assistance.

Conceived, developed, and implemented by USDA, the system won an award in 1976 as the most innovative computer processing program of the year. The system was directed by **Paul Kugler**, now an assistant administrator of the Farmers Home Administration.

conservation practices, and thus, increase their productivity.

Already underway to help small farmers are USDA grants to promote direct marketing, or the sale of produce directly to consumers. Totalling close to \$2 million, the grants are being used to develop roadside stands, open-air markets, and farms where consumers can "pick their own."

In addition to **Secretary Bergland**, who attended the Small Farm Conference in Des Moines, Iowa, other USDA officials included **Assistant Secretary Alex Mercure** and **Deputy Assistant Secretary Dave Unger** who attended regional sessions in Montgomery, Ala.; La Grande, Ore.; Albuquerque, N. Mex.; and Poland Spring, Maine. Also attending the conferences were **Carl Larson**, deputy associate administrator of the Farmers Home Administration, and **Ovid Bay**, small farm program coordinator for the Science and Education Administration.



As farmers identified high priority problems, Lynn Pickinpaugh of the Farmers Home Administration, wrote them on a flip chart for later discussion. Pickinpaugh, director of the production loan division, represented FmHA at the Small Farm Conference in Albuquerque, N.M.



In USDA Patio in Washington, Secretary Bergland joined group of Hispanic employees on observance of National Hispanic Heritage Week. The occasion spotlighted the enormous contributions made by Hispanics to this country. Opening the week-long observance, which featured exhibits and other visuals, Secretary Bergland pledged his "continued support for the recognition of the many talents that persons of all colors, races, and ethnic backgrounds have made to the strength of the United States." The Secretary added that he strongly endorses "the commitment of President Carter to make greater federal employment opportunities available to Hispanic Americans. Equal employment opportunity for Hispanics is essential if our commitment to human rights is to be achieved." Joining the Secretary during the observance were Assistant Secretaries Joan S. Wallace (to right of Secretary Bergland) and Alex Mercure (second from left).

For the sixth year in a row, savings from employee suggestions and special achievements topped \$300 million. Savings hit \$319 million in FY 1977, according to latest data published by the Civil Service Commission. The total equals the average taxes of over 172,000 Americans.

CSC noted that more than 200,000 suggestions were submitted in FY '77 and better than one of four was adopted. Average benefits from each were \$3,000 while the average award was over \$100.

In addition, nearly 150,000 special achievement awards were granted during the year. On the average, each special achievement produced \$1,000 in benefits, and earned employees an average of over \$200.

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Milton Sloane, Editor
Sharon Edwards, Editorial Assistant



Touring USDA, a group of Prince Georges County (Maryland) school teachers learned what it takes to get a good job in today's highly complex business world. For the benefit of their students, the teachers wanted to know the kind of business skills employers are looking for, the most common problems facing beginning employees, and the type of machines they are expected to operate. The teachers also asked about the impact of word-processing upon business education students, and wanted suggestions for prospective graduates. As part of the tour, the group visited USDA's large computer center and the word processing unit of the Farmers Home Administration. Above, the teachers get a briefing on the functions of the Washington Computer Center from computer programmer Dennis Egan of the Office of Operations and Finance. Shirley Warring, Office of Personnel, led off the tour with a description of USDA and a summary of the various business positions USDA offers. At the end of the tour, the teachers agreed that the information they gained would be helpful in better preparing their students for the world of work.

FIRST LADY ANNOUNCES LARGEST FmHA LOAN



(photo courtesy of Miami Beach Sun Reporter)

First Lady Rosalyn Carter announces the largest loan ever made by the Farmers Home Administration. Appearing at Miami news conference with Mrs. Carter were (from left) Dr. Delio Cobo, Chairman of the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority; Mike Hightower, FmHA State Director; and Gordon Cavanaugh, FmHA Administrator.

The Farmers Home Administration got some direct help from the White House recently in tropical Miami, Fla.

Appearing at a press conference, **First Lady Rosalyn Carter** honored FmHA by announcing the agency's approval of its largest loan ever. The loan was made to the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority in the amount of \$53,225,000. The money will be used to help finance a public water system serving more than 21,000 residences and 2,400 other users in the Florida Keys.

The system will include 138 miles of pipeline, three new wells, a filtration plant, and a one-million-gallon storage tank. It will also include expanded treatment facilities and improved pumping capacity. Officials anticipate that the new improved system, which will replace a more costly system, will result in considerable savings to users because of reduced energy consumption. The current system uses about 100,000 barrels of fuel oil per month just in the desalinization process. By eliminating two treatment plants and five pumping stations, officials estimate they can save \$2.7 million a year.

In addition to USDA, the State of Florida has contributed nearly \$25 million to the project, and the Economic Development Administration has kicked in an additional \$1.1 million.

In Florida for the White House announcement were FmHA Administrator **Gordon Cavanaugh**, Assistant Administrator for Community Programs **Dwight Calhoun**, Information Director **Stan Weston**, and Florida State Director **Mike Hightower**.

Commenting on the nation's overall rural development policy, FmHA Administrator Cavanaugh said, "The administration's aim is to be a more effective partner in state and local rural development efforts. Its policies and investment decisions try to reflect state and local policies and support local development efforts."

Current Head of REA

Robert W. Feragen, a veteran director of consumer-owned power systems, was recently sworn in as administrator of the Rural Electrification Administration. He replaces **David A. Hamil** who retired.

Feragen, 53, had been deputy administrator of REA since joining USDA this past July. Prior to that, he was general manager of Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company, a public corporation. He has also served as general manager of the Northeast Public Power Association, and worked for 10 years with electric power cooperatives in Bismarck, N.D., and in Madison, S.D.



Bob Feragen, former deputy administrator of Rural Electrification Administration, makes the transition to administrator of the agency, succeeding David Hamil.

(cont'd on next page)

(cont'd from page 1)

This past May, Feragen received the James D. Donovan Personal Achievement Award from the American Public Power Association for "individual contributions to public power generally in management, engineering, public relations and other phases of utility operation."

As REA administrator, Feragen will be responsible for the agency's rural electric and telephone lending programs in 47 states. Secretary Bergland has called REA "the most successful example of rural development in the history of the nation."

Born in Minot, N.D., Feragen received degrees from Iowa State University. He was formerly an assistant professor with Texas A&M College, and with the State University of New York at Plattsburgh.

Feragen's great uncle, **Frank White**, was the first two-term governor of North Dakota. He was later Treasurer of the United States.

At a swearing-in ceremony in the USDA Patio, Secretary Bergland said: "Bob Feragen brings to REA an understanding of grass-roots rural America, and of the importance of electric power and telephone service for the people served by the rural systems." □



Lobby billboard makes the point as Percy R. Luney (right), of USDA's Office of Equal Opportunity, is welcomed to regional conference in Milwaukee, Wis. Welcoming Luney are USDA Deputy Regional Forester J. S. Tixier (center) and Civil Service Regional Director Gilbert Santiago. Luney was on hand to keynote training session on compliance with Title VI of 1964 Civil Rights Act. Title VI prohibits excluding people from participating in federally assisted programs because of race, color, or national origin. During his talk, Luney said that Forest Service programs to teach individuals a skill are a shining star among agency activities, particularly in relation to minority participation. However, he noted that there are several program areas where minorities have very poor representation. The Forest Service, Luney pointed out—as well as other agencies—is responsible for providing technical guidance and information to help minority businesses and landowners reach a point where they are "free to compete equally."

Frank Conductor of Info Center

As part of its expanded service to the public, the Science and Education Administration has named **Robyn G. Frank**, a career information specialist, to head the Food and Nutrition Information Center at Beltsville, Md.

Located at the National Agricultural Library, the center is the only unit of its type in the country. It collects and lends nutrition information on a nationwide basis to state and federal agencies, research scientists, dietitians, nutritionists, and educational institutions. Established in 1971, the center is part of an intensified effort to provide broader public service in the area of food and nutrition.

In announcing Frank's appointment, **Dr. Richard A. Farley**, SEA deputy director for technical information, said the center will broaden its scope of coverage and "significantly expand dissemination of

information" in line with public concern.

Prior to her appointment, Frank worked 10 years in the planning, development, and operation of specialized information centers. In 1969, she was a research assistant in the District of Columbia school system with responsibility for an information center for school personnel. In 1971, she worked under contract to the Office of Education developing a national model information system. For the past five years, Frank has served as a technical information specialist in Beltsville.

Born in the Nation's Capital, Frank received a bachelor's and a master's degree from the University of Maryland.



Career information specialist Robyn G. Frank has been named to head an intensified food and nutrition information program with SEA.

Sick leave use by federal employees may be on the decline. According to the Civil Service Commission, federal employees averaged 9.3 workdays on sick leave in 1976, compared to 9.6 days in 1975.

Farmers Home Is A Friend in Need, Indeed!

Up until about a year ago, **Loye and Kathleen Rider** had never heard of the Farmers Home Administration. But now that they have, they are grateful it exists.

Showing that big government does care, FmHA has made the Riders two of the happiest people on earth.

Through the agency, the Riders have been able to buy their first home—after renting for 21 years—and fix it up the way they wanted to. More importantly, perhaps, and again through FmHA, the Riders were able to hold onto the home after misfortune struck.

With their two children, the Riders now own their own home in Bellefonte, Pa. Situated on a hill, the house has nine rooms (plus two baths) and a full basement.

The Riders bought the home with help from **Fred Attinger**, FmHA county supervisor. Attinger showed the Riders the house, and told them it was government-owned because the previous owners didn't finish paying for it. Attinger then determined that the Riders' income qualified the couple for FmHA financing.

Through its housing loan program, FmHA finances loans by lenders to moderate income families. Financing is made only to families unable to obtain loans elsewhere at rates they can reasonably afford. The homes FmHA finances must be located in a rural area, with a population of 10,000 or less. On occasions, financing may also be made in slightly heavier populated areas if there is a serious lack of mortgage credit.

As with similar borrowers, FmHA geared the Riders' loan around the couple's income. Terms of the loan included a 30-year mortgage at eight percent interest, a reasonable monthly note, and no down payment (other than closing costs). FmHA also included a \$1,500 loan in the Riders' mortgage for home improvements.

Deciding to add his own personal touch, Loye Rider—a factory worker—took the plunge and began remodeling the house himself. He completely refurbished the kitchen

and painted, paneled, and refinished other areas of the house. With little carpentry experience, Rider frequently worked seven hours a night on the house after completing a 12-hour workday. Unfortunately, the exhausting schedule soon took its toll. Rider suffered a heart attack and was out of work for seven months.

With his income reduced, Rider worried about his home and how he would meet the monthly payments.

But Attinger had the solution. FmHA, he told Rider, would reduce the monthly payment to a level the Riders could easily manage. FmHA did, and the Riders still have their home.

Now fully recovered—but working at a reduced pace—Rider is continuing his remodeling project with help from his family.

Summing up his gratitude for FmHA, Rider said that “anyone who qualifies and doesn't take advantage of Farmers Home is foolish. It took me nearly 60 years to discover them, but it's been the opportunity of a lifetime.”



Delighted over owning their first home, Loye and Kathleen Rider pose outside their two-story dwelling financed by FmHA. Inside (below), Loye Rider proudly shows off couple's refurbished kitchen also made possible with FmHA loan.

(photos courtesy of Centre Daily Times)



Nutrients and Foods for Health

Foods supply nutrients your body needs to build, maintain, and repair tissues. There are about 45 nutrients necessary for growth, development, and good health.

Because no one food contains all nutrients in the exact amount the body requires, a good diet will include a variety of foods that together will supply all nutrients needed.

Outlining some of the nutrients you need is a four-color poster printed by the Food and Nutrition Service. Distributed to food groups, consumers, and food-service personnel, "Nutrients and Foods for Health" also explains what nutrients do for you and some of the foods that supply them. The poster explains that:

Protein Builds and repairs all body tissues—skin, bone, hair, blood, muscle, etc. Helps form antibodies to fight infection. Is a part of hormones and enzymes which are responsible for regulating body functions such as digestion and growth. May be used to furnish energy (calories). Good sources are meat; fish; poultry; eggs; dried peas and beans (especially soybeans); milk and milk products; peanut butter; and nuts.

Fat Supplies a large amount of energy in a small amount of food. Some fats carry vitamins A, D, E, and K. Needed for healthy skin. Helps delay hunger feelings. Many medical authorities recommend that no more than 35% of the calories eaten in a day come from fat. Good sources are oil; shortening; butter; margarine; bacon; visible fat on meat; chocolate; and nuts.

Carbohydrate Supplies food energy. Helps the body make the best use of other nutrients. Good sources are cereal grains; sugar and sweets; rice; pastas; selected fruits as bananas and dried fruits; and selected vegetables as potatoes, corn, and lima beans.

Calcium Helps build strong bones and teeth. Helps blood clot.

Helps muscles and nerves function normally. Needed to activate certain enzymes which help change food into energy. Good sources are milk and milk products like cheese; sardines and shellfish; green leafy vegetables such as turnip, spinach, and mustard greens.

Phosphorus Helps build strong bones and teeth. Needed by certain enzymes which help change food into energy. Good sources are meat; fish; poultry; dried peas and beans; milk and milk products; egg yolk; and whole grain bread and cereal.

Iron Combines with protein to make hemoglobin, the red substance in the blood that carries oxygen from lungs to cells, and myoglobin which stores oxygen in muscles. Needed to prevent iron deficiency anemia. Good sources are liver; red meats; shellfish; egg yolk; dark green leafy vegetables; dried peas and beans; dried prunes, raisins, and apricots; molasses; and whole grain and enriched bread and cereal.

Iodine Necessary for proper functioning of thyroid gland. Prevents some forms of goiter. Good sources are seafoods and iodized table salt.

Thiamin Promotes normal appetite and digestion. Necessary for a healthy nervous system. Needed in certain enzymes which help change food into energy. Good sources are liver; meat (especially pork); dried peas and beans; wheat germ; and whole grain and enriched bread and cereal.

Riboflavin Helps cells use oxygen. Helps maintain good vision. Needed for smooth skin. Helps prevent scaling or cracking of skin around mouth and nose. Needed in certain enzymes which help change food into energy. Good sources are liver; milk and milk products as cheese; green leafy vegetables; meat; eggs; whole

grain and enriched bread and cereal.

Niacin Promotes normal appetite and digestion. Necessary for a healthy nervous system. Needed in certain enzymes which help change food into energy. Good sources are liver; meat; fish; poultry; green vegetables; nuts (especially peanuts); whole grain bread and cereal (except corn); and enriched bread and cereal.

Vitamin C (Ascorbic Acid) Helps bind cells together and strengthens walls of blood vessels. Needed for healthy gums. Helps body resist infection. Promotes healing of wounds and cuts. Good sources are certain fruits and vegetables such as citrus fruits and juices; broccoli; strawberries; tomatoes; cauliflower; cabbage; melons; green leafy vegetables; and potatoes.

Vitamin A Helps keep the skin healthy. Protects against night blindness. Needed for normal vision. Promotes growth and development. Helps build resistance to infection. Good sources are liver; fish liver oils; dark green leafy vegetables; deep yellow fruits and vegetables; egg yolk; butter; fortified margarine; whole milk; and vitamin A fortified skim milk.

Vitamin D Helps the body absorb calcium and phosphorus which build strong bones and teeth. Good sources are vitamin D fortified milk; liver; fish liver oils; and egg yolk.

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Milton Sloane, Editor
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It's Tough All Over

President Carter's cost-cutting goals have begun to strike close to home.

In a speech in New Orleans, Secretary Bergland said that USDA is in for some tough budget cuts and "stringent belt-tightening" during fiscal 1980, which begins October 1, 1979. Speaking to the Department's Management Council, which is composed of representatives from each agency, the Secretary said that actions are now being considered which will—

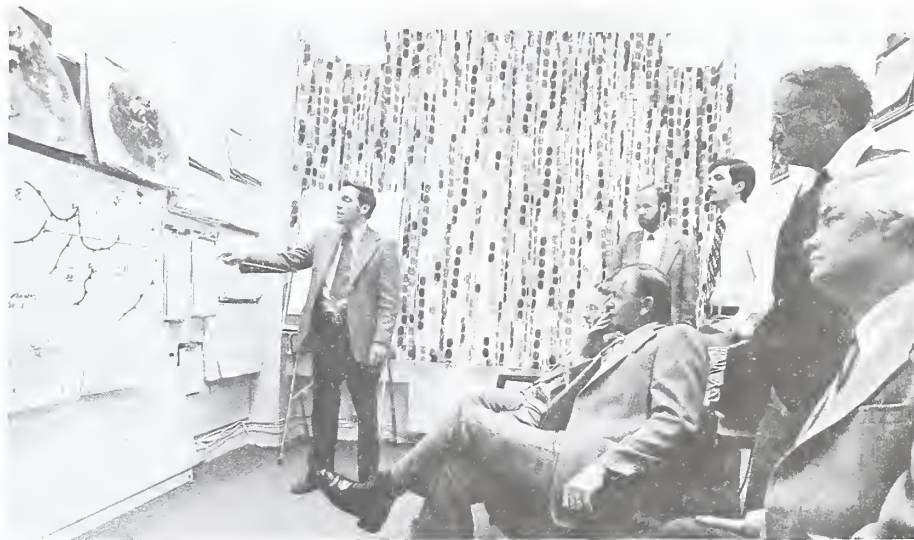
- reduce USDA's workforce
- curtail or postpone some lower-priority programs
- eliminate overlapping and duplicatory services, including publications
- eliminate some unnecessary regulations
- apply a "sunset" (periodic) review on all ongoing projects
- place a cap on pay raises.

"However," the Secretary added, "high priority programs affecting farm income, farm exports, human nutrition, and some others will not be materially changed.

"It would be folly and self-defeating," the Secretary explained, "to tinker with programs that might endanger food production and consumption. This could only lead to more inflation.

"It would be senseless not to continue our export programs in view of the large surpluses of wheat and feed grains we have on hand; and in view of the vital importance of farm exports in reducing our balance of payments to strengthen our dollar.

"For over two years," Secretary Bergland continued, "President Carter has been asking Congress to cooperate in cutting excessive government spending and return to a



WEATHER WATCH

Flanked by leading government weather specialists, Secretary Bergland gets a briefing on worldwide harvesting conditions in the new Agricultural Weather Information Center located in USDA. The Secretary is following through on a commitment to develop a worldwide agricultural weather network. Purpose of the network is to provide a continuous watch of weather conditions throughout the world to get an early warning of events that impact significantly on crop and livestock production. The center is staffed and operated jointly by USDA and the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Also attending the briefing was Dr. Howard Hjort (to Secretary Bergland's right), USDA Director of Economics, Policy Analysis and Budget. Participating in the briefing were, from left: NOAA meteorologist Don Haddock (with pointer), USDA weather analyst Dr. J. L. Lambert, NOAA meteorologist Earl Hooper, NOAA assistant administrator Dr. Richard E. Hallgren, and Dr. Thomas S. Austin (right foreground), director of NOAA's Environmental Data and Information Service.

balanced budget. On November 7th, the voters sent all of us a clear message: 'reduce big government, or else.'

The federal government, the Secretary said, has no alternative but to cut spending and take the lead in fighting inflation.

In a letter last spring, President Carter instructed his Cabinet to take every action possible to hold down government spending, and to analyze their agency operations and recommend specific steps they might take to reinforce inflation-fighting efforts.

Secretary Bergland said that the actions now being considered by USDA are in line with the President's goal of cutting the 1980 budget deficit to \$30 billion.

A Step Up

Secretary Bergland designated **Norman L. Plotka**, a lawyer with USDA for 40 years, to serve as Acting General Counsel. Plotka, formerly an assistant general counsel, fills the position vacated recently by **Sarah Weddington**, who left to go to the White House.

An Open Invitation

The Science and Education Administration is seeking knowledge.

The agency is looking for recent research involving the physical and chemical characteristics of dust. It is looking for answers to questions about the mechanism of dust explosions, methods of measuring dust concentration and particle size distribution, practical and novel means for preventing explosions, methods of handling and merchandising dust, hazard control, and utilization of dust.

The reason for the quest is to help avoid a recurrence of the disastrous grain dust explosions that took the lives of so many inspectors recently.

Contributed papers will be discussed at a grain dust symposium sponsored by USDA's Federal Grain Inspection Service, the Grain Elevator and Processing Society, the National Grain and Feed Association, and Kansas State University's Department of Grain Science and Industry. The symposium will be held October 2-4, 1979, in Manhattan, Kans.

Anyone wishing to present a paper should contact **Dr. Byron S. Miller**, U.S. Grain Marketing Research Laboratory, 1515 College Avenue, Manhattan, Kans. 66502, (913/539-9141). Titles must be submitted by February 15, 1979, and abstracts by May 15, 1979, for distribution to participants prior to the symposium. Those presenting technical papers will be asked to submit a final manuscript at the meeting.

Don't Make the \$300 Mistake

Job a little slow and you think maybe you'll get out the old "171" and bring it up to date? Bored with filing so you take a little time to brush up your job resume? Don't do it.

The Civil Service Commission reminds employees that it is unlawful to use government time or agency materials when searching for a job. Such an activity is personal business, the commission points out, and should therefore be conducted in a

Getting Back to Basics

So you've finished school, developed a skill, and landed a pretty good job. Now that you've been at it for awhile, you begin to feel a little rusty. Perhaps some of the things you learned are beginning to escape you—because you don't use them every day.

It may be time for a refresher.

such fundamental concepts as theory, logic, semantics, hypotheses, problems, and other topics.

During the course, the group related each day's lessons to their own work as researchers at the Forest Service's North Central Forest Experiment Station. There, the scientists are involved in various aspects of



Forest Service scientists discuss the finer points of research at a two-week workshop in St. Paul, Minn. Directing the discussions is Dr. Mario Bunge (right), a leading philosopher of science from Montreal, Canada. With Dr. Bunge, from left, are William Mattson, Rolfe Leary, Brad Smith, Gary Brand, Rick Knopf, John Shomaker, and Al Lundgren.

In St. Paul, Minn., a group of well-trained researchers went back to school for two weeks recently to review some of the things they once learned, and to explore new techniques.

Led by an expert, the scientists reviewed the basic elements of research and evaluated traditional theories. Twenty-four in all, including entomologists, plant physiologists, recreationists, and forest economists—the scientists went over

forestry research, ranging from determining how wood is formed to controlling harmful plant diseases.

Directing the intensive review was **Dr. Mario Bunge**, a leading authority on theoretical physics from Montreal, Canada. Dr. Bunge conducted lively lectures on theory and testing, along with discussions on various research approaches. The researchers were particularly interested in Dr. Bunge's concept of what science is, and of its relevant importance to other pursuits.

Summing up his opinion of the course, as well as that of many of his colleagues, **Dr. Rolfe Leary**, a forest mensurationist (mathematician) at the North Central Station, said that the course gave them more than they had expected. "We received a sharpening of the tools for scientific research," he said, "and returned with a better understanding of scientific theory."

personal manner. Penalty for violating the law, CSC notes, is a \$300 fine, or imprisonment, or both.

CSC issued the reminder after receiving requests from several temporary employees—on government stationery and in franked envelopes—asking that they be appointed to permanent jobs.

"Well Done," SCS!

The satisfaction of doing a good job is reward enough. But it doesn't hurt when the boss says "good work."

Soil Conservation Service is basking in the good word they received recently from Secretary Bergland. The Secretary congratulated SCS for its innovative approach toward improving planning for the conservation of soil, water, and other resources. The Secretary commended SCS for developing a more flexible policy of helping farmers and other land users get just the help they want.

Under the policy, SCS field personnel will spend less time preparing

long-range plans for everyone who requests assistance, in order to meet farmers' most immediate needs. Conservationists, thus, will have a greater opportunity to work more directly with farmers out in the field.

SCS developed the policy after recent studies showed that most land users carry out planning decisions within two to three years after plans are prepared. SCS previously developed the long-range plans to cover anything farmers wanted to do over a much longer period. The plans were developed automatically each time a land user requested SCS assistance.

SCS notes that long-range plans will continue to be prepared for certain projects.

Commenting on the new conservation policy, SCS Administrator **R. M. Davis** explained that "conservation planning is very important, but it should be only as detailed as land users need it to be. Its aim should be the same as the land users: to apply and maintain conservation practices on the land."

Davis urged SCS employees nationwide "to use your initiative and creativity to provide the kind of help people want."

In a note to Davis, Secretary Bergland complimented SCS for a job "well done" in developing and instituting the policy changes.

Giving More Than They're Getting

The Forest Service is fortunate that not many people heed the advice, "Never volunteer for anything."

Since 1942, when the Volunteers in the National Forest Act was passed, more than 36,000 individuals have contributed work valued at over \$7 million to the benefit of national forests. Serving as volunteers, the individuals have provided information to forest visitors, assisted at special events, conducted research, cleared trails, cleaned up litter, and participated in environmental education programs.

One of the most successful efforts regarding the volunteers is the stationing of "hosts" at campgrounds to answer questions, explain camping rules, and illustrate good camping techniques. According to Forest Service officials, campgrounds using the hosts have shown a marked decrease in vandalism, litter, and associated problems.

Because some citizens could not afford to volunteer their services unless they are reimbursed for expenses such as lunches, transportation, and lodging, the Forest Service was allowed to pay them for out-of-pocket expenses.

The agency was limited, though, to a total of \$100,000 a year.

Because of this limitation, hundreds of volunteers had to be turned down, even though the Forest Service could have used more than twice the number in the program. A new law removes the \$100,000 limitation, allowing the Forest Service to increase the use of citizen volunteers.

Persons interested in volunteering their services to enhance the environment and assist in national forest resource conservation should contact their nearest Forest Service office.

Rated G for Good

Score one for the Department's film-clip service.

A TV viewer in Berkeley, Calif., had nothing but praise for a USDA news film: "I was pleased to see the film USDA has produced for several reasons. It informed me of current research being funded by the Department of Agriculture, and ultimately, my tax dollars; and it revealed a great effort on the part of the Department to communicate its activities, expenditures, and accomplishments to the widest possible audience by using the television medium."

The praise was all the sweeter because the film had been projected by a San Francisco TV station as an example of "government waste."



PEOPLE

Dr. Clifford W. Hesseltine, a pioneer in microbial research and formerly head of the world's largest collection of molds and bacteria, has been named winner of the Pasteur Award for 1978. By unanimous vote, the Illinois Society for Microbiology chose Hesseltine for the award because of his outstanding research involving fungi that grow on food. Hesseltine joined USDA in 1953 and in 1959 received the Department's Superior Service Award. In Peoria, Ill., Hesseltine is chief of the Science and Education Administration's fermentation laboratory at the Northern Regional Research Center.

Forest Service Chief **John McGuire** has been honored by a national society for his leadership that resulted in more recreation days on national forests than on all other federal lands combined. McGuire was honored in Miami by the National Society of Park Resources.

Dr. Elias D. Dekazos, a plant physiologist with the Science and Education Administration, has been cited by the Florida State Horticul-



Microbiologist Clifford W. Hesseltine, a veteran researcher of fungi on food, has been honored with the Pasteur Award for 1978.

tural Society for his notable research involving frozen blueberries. Dr. Dekazos has received a silver medal, certificate, and a small honorarium for discovering and controlling the cause of the change in the fruit's texture. Employed in Athens, Ga., Dr. Dekazos is the first out-of-state resident to receive the honor.



AND THEY'RE OFF!

Kicking up their heels, 126 federal employees competed in the 47th running of the Inter-agency Race, held in the Nation's Capital. Sponsored by a chapter of the President's Council on Physical Fitness, the race featured runners from 11 different agencies, which rotate in co-sponsoring the event. Seventeen USDA employees participated in the contest which began at the Jefferson Memorial and circled the beautiful Tidal Basin. The race covered three kilometers, or 1.86 miles. Contestants crossed the finish line in times ranging from 9:38 to 19:32 minutes. For scoring purposes, only the first five runners from an agency count for points. USDA, overall, placed fifth in the event—behind NASA (which was represented by a few astronauts in training), Smithsonian Institution, the FBI, and the Department of Transportation.

A Step In The Right-eous Direction

If you've ever had to take leave because of religion, you won't have to anymore.

President Carter has signed into law a bill that allows employees to adjust their work schedules in order to observe religious occasions.

Under the new law, employees no longer have to use annual leave or lose pay to observe religious holidays and beliefs. Instead, they may elect to work compensatory overtime or use compensatory time equal to the amount of time taken to meet religious obligations. Compensatory overtime could be worked either before or after the time off, but would have to be completed within a reasonable period.

No restrictions regarding the kind of religious holiday or observance are contained in the law; however, a provision permits an agency to deny a request for time off if it interferes with an agency's mission.

The Civil Service Commission has informed agencies of the new law, and indicated that it plans to issue further regulations regarding implementation.

**Need help?
Call us.
Want to help?
Call us.**



**Red Cross is
counting on you.**

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Straus Resigns

Lewis B. Straus, administrator of USDA's Food and Nutrition Service, resigned recently. He had served as FNS administrator since March 1977.

In accepting Straus' resignation, Assistant Secretary **Carol T. Foreman** said: "I regret, but understand, Lew's resignation and his desire to change position. Lew has done a remarkable job in reorganizing the Food and Nutrition Service and building that agency's staff. It has been a hard, tough job. He has commuted to New Jersey to be with his family during his service in Washington. That has not made his task any easier."

A Note of Thanks

Praising good deeds wherever they occur, Secretary Bergland has commended a third USDA agency for an outstanding accomplishment.

This time the Secretary has commended the Food and Nutrition Service for its administration of the food distribution program. At a meeting of the Commodity Credit Corporation Board, Secretary Bergland told **Lewis B. Straus**, FNS Administrator, "I would like to congratulate you and your colleagues for resourceful management of this program. I think this is an excellent way to run the government's business."

In a follow-up note, Assistant Secretary **Carol Foreman** said, "I would like to add my thanks and



Roundball superstar Julius "Dr. J." Erving (left), of the Philadelphia 76'ers, teamed up with the Food and Nutrition Service recently to promote observance of National School Lunch Week. The Good Doctor recorded three 30-second radio spots advertising school lunch and breakfast programs for use on stations around the country. Above, "Dr. J." goes over the scripts with Joe Dunphy (center) and Herb Strum, information specialists with Food and Nutrition Service's Mid-Atlantic Regional Office in Robinson, N.J.

express my appreciation to all of the FNS staff involved, including the people out in the regions, for a job well done. Too often, we only hear about things going wrong and we should recognize the effort these people have devoted to making things go right routinely.

"Please pass the Secretary's and my compliments on to the people in food distribution."

Through the food distribution

program, FNS donates foods to various food program outlets—including schools, charitable institutions, nutrition programs for the elderly, summer camps, disaster relief agencies, and needy family programs on some Indian reservations.

Secretary Bergland recently applauded achievements by the Farmers Home Administration and the Soil Conservation Service.

Houston's New Calling

Veteran professional **Donald L. Houston**, a veterinarian, has been appointed acting administrator of USDA's Food Safety and Quality Service. He replaces **Sydney J. Butler**, who returned full-time to his position as deputy assistant secretary for food and consumer services.

Dr. Houston, 44, had been deputy administrator of FSQS, working closely with Butler in the overall administration of the agency. FSQS is responsible for assuring consumers of wholesome food through federal inspection of meat, poultry, eggs, and egg products, and for standardization and grading services



Former deputy administrator Donald Houston becomes acting administrator of Food Safety and Quality Service. The appointment permits former acting administrator Sydney Butler to return full-time to his position as deputy assistant secretary for food and consumer services.

for meat, poultry, fruit, vegetable, and dairy products. The agency is also responsible for purchasing food distributed through the school lunch and other domestic food programs.

Born in East St. Louis, Ill., Dr. Houston is a graduate of the University of Illinois, where he earned his doctorate. Except for two years with the Army, he has spent his entire career with USDA. Dr. Houston joined USDA in 1961, and has served in Washington since 1965.



Sign of the Times

Rooted deep in the middle of a parking lot in a suburban shopping center, a 50-foot silo in Portage, Wis., is all that's left of some prime agricultural land. Preserved for future use, possibly as a signpost, the silo serves as testimony to the rapid conversion of U.S. farmland to urban uses. In the past 10 years alone, according to the Soil Conservation Service, developers have converted about 29 million acres of rural land (equalling the size of Louisiana) to shopping centers, housing developments, roads, airports, and lakes. If the rate continues, SCS estimates, the amount of land converted in the next two decades will equal the size of Oregon. Responding to this environmental threat, Secretary Bergland (bottom photo) signs a land-use policy statement which directs USDA agencies to avoid proposing or assisting actions that could reduce the amount of land available for food and fiber production. Among those attending the signing ceremony were (from left): John Gustafson, Environmental Protection Agency; Alex Mercure, USDA Assistant Secretary for Rural Development; James Selvaggi and John Simmons, Department of Housing and Urban Development; George Dunsmore, House Agriculture Committee staff; Dr. M. Rupert Cutler, USDA Assistant Secretary for Conservation, Research and Education; James W. Gilmier, Senate Agriculture Committee staff; and Stewart Smith, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service.



A Matter of Principles

The financial books for certain government officials will be a bit more open beginning in 1979.

President Carter has signed a law requiring senior government officials (in Grades GS-16 or equivalent and up) to file detailed financial statements that will be open to public inspection. In most cases, the statements must be filed with agencies by May 15, 1979.

Called the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, the law also restricts affected officials from earning outside income of more than 15 percent of their annual government salary, and increases restrictions on what employees in certain sensitive jobs may do after they leave government.

The law further creates an Office of Government Ethics (OGE) which will be given broad responsibility to develop policies, rules, and regulations pertaining to conflicts of interest and the requirements for public financial disclosure. OGE will also monitor, investigate, and enforce compliance with these regulations.

According to the Office of Personnel, the Act affects nearly 300 employees in USDA.

New Retiree Benefits

Retirees who have health insurance coverage under the Retired Federal Employees Health Benefits Program will see a 1,600 percent increase in rates after January 1. The excess reserves the program has had are depleted and individual coverage will rise from 50 cents to \$1.00 per month, and family coverage will rise from \$1.00 to \$16.00 per month.

According to the Civil Service Commission, premiums will be even higher than many Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHB) premiums, although the retiree program benefits are not as good.

Because many retirees cannot afford such an increase, CSC has changed its regulations to enable eligible annuitants to change from the retiree program to the FEHB program.



As this APHIS inspector (right) knows, the most innocent-looking plants and packages brought into this country by travelers can harbor dangerous pests and disease. At ports of entry throughout the United States, travelers' luggage are examined closely by trained USDA inspectors to keep these small, but potentially deadly, foreign agents out.

Never A Dull Moment

USDA plant inspectors encounter something new and old every day.

At luggage counters throughout the country—at airports, seaports, and border crossings—the inspectors run into all sorts of schemes to smuggle potentially harmful goods into this country. Hired by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, the inspectors are usually a step ahead.

In Miami, for example, plant protection and quarantine inspector **Roger Lyle** foiled some clever dope peddlers recently in their attempt to smuggle

in narcotics. On a routine inspection at a cold storage facility, Lyle noticed a tear in the bottom of a cardboard box containing cut flowers. He also noticed some clear plastic between the stapled sections where the box formed its corners. Upon further investigation, Lyle discovered that the plastic contained some clean white powder. So he called U.S. Customs. The powder proved to be cocaine with an extremely high street value. For the next three days, inspectors were kept busy intercepting more cocaine found in similar boxes.

In El Paso, Tex., inspectors almost literally ran into a real swinger. At a border crossing, a \$2,000 racehorse, named "Mr. Swinger," and his rider tried to give U.S. inspectors the slip when coming into the United States from Mexico. But this was one race they didn't win. They were apprehended and kept in custody for a week until the owner paid a \$1,000 fine plus boarding fees.

At the Port of Houston, inspectors discovered a most unusual gift while examining household goods from Korea. Arranged neatly in rows in a box and wrapped in cellophane were horse apples (manure) bearing a

(cont'd on next page)

Enrollment changes can be made any time and will be effective January 1, 1979, or the first day of the next month following receipt of the request.

Another break for retirees is a bill signed by President Carter reducing from 12 to five years the service needed for federal employees to carry their health and life insurance benefits into retirement. To continue coverage, however, employees must retire on an immediate annuity, and must have had coverage under the programs for the last five years in which they were eligible.

sticker with the words "non-edible." After confiscating the package, the inspectors could only assume that it was a gift for someone who has everything!

Inspectors in Roma, Tex., employed a form of modern technology recently to intercept an illegal item. The inspectors used a dog to sniff out a parrot that was concealed in a tool box in a taxicab. The dogs are normally used to sniff out narcotics.

In another example of outstanding detective work, inspectors in El Paso intercepted several undeclared items from the driver of a California camper. Checking out the camper, the inspectors found three bottles of liquor wrapped in dirty clothes and placed in a box, 15 pounds of Mexican sausage stashed in an ice chest, and a dead bird among three nested woven plastic shopping bags.

In Del Rio, Calif., a group of hunters returning from Mexico can testify to APHIS inspectors' efficiency. Returning in a chartered plane, the hunters were caught trying to smuggle in over 700 doves. Not only was the dove-hunting season well over, but the hunters had no license at all. One of the hunters assumed the blame for the attempted smuggling and was fined nearly \$1,500.

Working side by side, USDA and U.S. Customs inspectors in Nogales, Ariz., apprehended two suspects

trying to smuggle in some exotic animals.

The inspectors became suspicious when they examined a pickup truck and found evidence of birds—but no birds. The driver explained that the birds had died and had been disposed of. However, the inspectors had the truck tailed through the back streets of the city.

At a hole in a fence, the inspectors saw an accomplice hand 12 red-necked parrots and an exotic raccoon to the truck driver and then cross the fence and board the pickup. The inspectors followed the truck to an interstate highway where they arrested the culprits. The birds were handed over to APHIS, and the raccoon was released to the local fish and wildlife agency.

In the Dallas/Fort Worth area, a female passenger earned a "first" of sorts when she tried to smuggle plants and fruit into the States. She was detained when a Customs inspector suspected that some of the items in her possession weighed more than they should have.

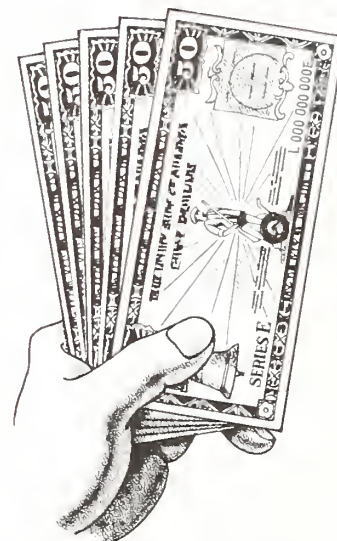
Examining the luggage closely, the inspector found a glass vase filled with cooked broccoli and tropical fruit at the bottom. The inspector also discovered seven mangoes and 10 plant cuttings lodged in soil. The woman was given the first fine assessed by Customs in the Dallas area for smuggled agricultural goods.

Finally, in one of the more peculiar cases, inspectors in Atlanta intercepted a cheese sandwich.

The inspectors were told that a passenger arriving on a flight from Germany had declared the sandwich. The "cheese" turned out to be a couple of barberry bushes sandwiched between two gigantic slices of pumpernickel!

Happy traveling! But make it legal.

Winning Hand.



Take stock in America.
Buy U.S. Savings Bonds.

Shape Up or . . .

Ever find yourself avoiding the stairs if there's an elevator nearby? Or is there more of you than there used to be?—

A good New Year's resolution could be: to get into shape.

To help you do that, the President's Council on Physical Fitness has issued a booklet that outlines a sensible approach to exercise. Called "An Introduction to Physical Fitness," the booklet recommends, however, that before beginning any exercise program, have a medical checkup first. Especially if you're over 30 or have a history of high blood pressure or heart trouble.

The booklet points out that the key to conducting any exercise program is moderation and consistency. To help you get back into shape, the booklet suggests that you start out by taking a brisk walk each day (for about a five-minute period) and gradually increase your time and distance each week. It also cautions you not to over-exert yourself. "Train not pain" the booklet recommends, and don't push yourself too far.

For a copy of the booklet, "An Introduction to Physical Fitness," send 60 cents to the Consumer Information Center, Dept. 32G, Pueblo, Colo. 81009.

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